A DISTRUST OF TRADITION: THE STUDY, PERFORMANCE AND RECEPTION OF SHAKESPEARE IN ENGLAND IN A CONTEXT OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE, 1919-1939

by

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A thesis submitted to
The University of Birmingham
for the degree of
MASTER OF LETTERS

The Shakespeare Institute
Department of English
The University of Birmingham
September 2011

ABSTRACT

This thesis proposes that Shakespeare's cultural authority was established in England by the end of the nineteenth century, but was challenged between the two World Wars of the twentieth century by the changing cultural, social and political circumstances generated by new artistic and cultural movements, and by an unstable post-war political and social environment.

It is argued that the study, performance and reception of Shakespeare was affected by changes in critical approaches to his works, attitudes to performance on stage, and varying approaches of the new media of talking pictures and radio.

The thesis puts Shakespeare into the context of a changing society by examining the political and social circumstances and the artistic and cultural influences which obtained during the period.

There follows an examination of the attitudes and deliberations of the emerging factions which were to dominate this twenty-year period of Shakespeare criticism.

Acknowledging other actions and influences, a study is made of the growing importance of the study of English and the effects of this upon the reception and consumption of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare in performance on stage, on the radio and on film is examined in the light of the foregoing, and threats and opportunities are evaluated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In addition to a rigorous and disciplined approach to study, the Director and Fellows of the Shakespeare Institute also provided friendship and encouragement during my time at that excellent place of learning. I am indebted to Professor Kate McLuskie, Dr. Jaq Bessell, Dr. Catherine Alexander and to Dr. Martin Wiggins whose lectures on Shakespeare criticism during my Master of Arts year inspired this thesis.

My studies were made easier and happier by the continuous help and advice, pleasantly given by Kate Welch and Karin Brown of the Shakespeare Institute Library. I also received crucial help from Rebecca White and Juliet Creese of the administrative staff of the Institute.

The many students whom I got to know during my extended time at the Institute were a source of inspiration and friendship, and are too numerous to name individually. Kathleen Bradley has been particularly supportive and a good friend.

To Philip Butler, of York, an enthusiastic supporter of my efforts, I am indebted for his reading and thoughtful criticism of some chapters of the thesis.

My greatest acknowledgement is to my wife, Una, whose patience and unflagging help and support has been both humbling and touching. She has spent many hours reading the text, as well as enduring my obsession with it. I could not have completed the thesis without her.

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of this thesis is to assess the cultural status and reception of Shakespeare in England between 1919 and 1939, by examining, as the main areas of concentration, literary criticism and performance in the context of the unprecedented cultural, social, political and technological changes which took place during that time. A further area of concentration is that of changes in the teaching of English, and a rise in the awareness of English language and literature brought about by initiatives taken by government and educational representatives. The thesis will argue that the study and reception of Shakespeare was influenced by a distrust of tradition of political and cultural régimes and also by the problems of adapting to the new environment which emerged from the changes identified above. The core subject of this thesis is that of England and Shakespeare between the two World Wars. Whilst many writers have examined specific aspects of the subject and period, none have embraced the whole core subject.

It is necessary to explain why the thesis is restricted to England, and what is meant by the 'Shakespeare' of its title. British academician and scholar, Sir Walter Raleigh, on the occasion of his lecture to the British Academy on 4 July 1918, said of Shakespeare that 'he embodies and exemplifies all of the virtues and most of the faults of England', and went on to say that

> I think that there is no national poet, of any great nation whatsoever who is so completely representative of his own people as Shakespeare is representative of the English.[1]

[1] Sir Walter Raleigh, *Shakespeare and England* (London: H. Milford, 1918), p. 3.

Raleigh used the word 'English' rather than 'British', and was speaking during a war which, in July 1918, showed little sign of ending, and in which many hundreds of thousands of British and Commonwealth soldiers had been killed. The statement might therefore be regarded at best as odd, or at worst, divisive. In his book, *Shakespeare in Time of War,* sub-headed, *Excerpts from the plays including topical allusion,* Francis Colmer asserts that Shakespeare is 'our one and only national poet'.[2] He also regrets that Shakespeare was not available to engage the German enemy, saying, 'How Shakespeare would have dealt with the present enemy is not difficult to guess, for of all nations, the Germans seem to have aroused his dislike most.'[3] Shakespeare, it would appear to Raleigh and Colmer, was something more than a respected and celebrated poet and playwright. He, or it, had become the symbol and embodiment of a kind of 'national spirit' which could be summoned to serve his native country when called upon, or otherwise act as an unmistakeable rallying point.

Whilst a twenty-first century view of Raleigh's and Colmer's reverential stance on Shakespeare might be dismissive, there are some aspects of the idea of Shakespeare as a quasi-paradigm for the nation which ring true, albeit on a more sober level than that which their remarks suggest. Following chapters will show that whatever the level of hyperbole or virtual deification was accorded to Shakespeare, there remained other constant, thoughtful and appreciative attitudes to his work which were demonstrated by writers, scholars, educationalists, and by some government agencies.

'Shakespeare' then, as used in the title of this thesis, is used adaptively throughout, and its use will be clear in each context in which it is used. The thesis uses the term 'the Shakespeare industry' sparingly, although, on occasion it is

[2] Francis Colmer, *Shakespeare in Time of War* (London: Smith, Elder and Company), p. xvii.
[3] *Ibid.* p, xxvi

considered unavoidable. The Oxford English Dictionary provides four definitions of the word 'industry', the fourth being '*colloq.* The diligent study of a particular topic *(the Shakespeare Industry)'.*[4] The temptation to use the term has been resisted, save for the odd occasion, on the grounds that its facility is undermined by its vagueness. The 'England' of the title is used specifically, mainly to exclude Scotland, Wales and Ireland/Northern Ireland, but the use of 'Britain' is inevitable from time to time when examining truly national matters such as the British Broadcasting Company/Corporation, national newspapers, film distribution, Acts of Parliament and so on, where the use of 'England' would be inappropriate or inaccurate.

It would be convenient, if misleading, to ascribe the changes brought about in the 1920s solely to the Great War of 1914-18, but it will be shown that whilst the war did produce changes in all of the sectors mentioned above, there were other influences which impacted upon the period, many of them originating prior to the war. It would also be convenient, with the advantage of hindsight, to treat the period between the first and second wars in a way which suggests that it was seen at the time as existing in an 'inter-war' context, when in fact, except for a few prescient commentators in the latter years of the period, there is no evidence that that notion was common. The belief that the 'Great War' of 1914-18 was 'the war to end all wars', seems to have prevailed throughout most of the period.

Writers on the period have sometimes found it convenient to package their work into one decade or another, and then ascribe to it a supposedly relevant characteristic. Examples of this are Madge Garland's *The Indecisive Decade,* on the 1930s, John Courtney Trewin's *The Turbulent Thirties* and Piers Brendon's gloomy

[4] *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English,* ed. by Delia Thompson, 9th edn. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995)

view of the same decade in *The Dark Valley*.[5] Given the popular imagery of the inter-war years, discussed below as a possibly misleading factor in the understanding of the period, such convenient labelling of it is not surprising, given its dramatic ending in 1939 in another world war. This thesis seeks to avoid the templates which have been applied to the period over the last seventy years, by examining particularly the works of those writers who demonstrated a tendency to reject some of the myths which have dogged the era.

The inter-war years suggested a suitable area of study because both England and Shakespeare were subjected to verifiably unprecedented changes. These would, it is argued, bring about a turning-point for both; where long-held beliefs were forced by new circumstances of society, politics and culture, to be re-examined, reassessed and ultimately either rejected or modified. Whilst it could be argued that all change might usually be considered unprecedented, the thesis claims that technological innovations alone, which were to bring about unique social and cultural change, single out the era as exceptional, i.e. not previously encountered in any form. The advent of wireless in 1922 and of talking pictures in 1928, are examples. Further examples, of a non-technological nature, include the areas of political enfranchisement, education and mass consumerism, all of which are discussed in the appropriate chapters.

The Commentators: Arguments and Acknowledgements.

Acknowledging the work of writers over the intervening years, it is necessary, for a thesis of this scope, to arrange such acknowledgement into three main sectors. The first is best expressed as the 'literary-historical' writers who dwell on either

[5] J.C. Trewin, *The Turbulent Thirties* (London: Macdonald, 1960)
Madge Garland, *The Indecisive Decade: The World of Fashion and Entertainment in the Thirties* (London: Macdonald, 1968)
Piers Brendon, *The Dark Valley* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2000)

literary criticism alone, or combine it with an historical overview, necessary especially when attempting to place Shakespeare in the context of the various cultural and artistic movements of the times. The second sector is that of education and the rise of English language and literature, also with reference to Shakespeare in print. The third is to do with Shakespeare in performance, in all forms.

Halpern and Modernism

Richard Halpern, in *Shakespeare Among the Moderns,* concentrates upon a movement, or perhaps more accurately, a series of movements which flourished over a period of about fifteen years between the wars, which were patronised and supported by self-appointed and supposedly anti-Philistine élites. 'Modernism', and the complexity of its definition, is discussed in chapter two. Many of the influential writers referred to, chose the concept of 'Modernism' as a means of identifying both a threat and an opportunity for the advancement of Shakespeare in an entirely new environment. In *Shakespeare among the Moderns,* Halpern puts Modernism into context when he discusses '…the prestige of modernism and its success in securing an institutional base in universities.'[6] He is broadly sympathetic to the concept of a formalised version of Modernism, and seeks to emphasise the necessity for revisiting the subject, saying for example that:

> Progressive critics of various stripes either maintain a massive silence with respect to the modernist line of criticism or regard it as a quaint and vaguely unhealthy phenomenon that, fortunately, has seen its day.[7]

In this might be detected Halpern's motive for writing *Shakespeare Among the Moderns,* as well as my own interest in the period, in that he believes that the

[6] Richards Halpern, *Shakespeare Among the Moderns* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 2.
[7] *Ibid,* p. 1.

'phenomenon' has received insufficient attention, given the 'prestige' mentioned above. The link which he makes between Shakespeare and Modernism enhances this prestige, and argues that a 'Modernist Shakespeare' is not an anomaly or an incongruity, an argument which is developed later. It will also be seen that, whilst some writers sought to distance themselves from any association of Shakespeare with the post-war times, Halpern has no difficulty:

> …since Shakespeare has become an icon of considerable power, our construction of him probably says something about the larger culture…Modernism constructs a Shakespeare lodged firmly in the twentieth century.[8]

Recurring at points in this thesis is an examination of the notion that Shakespeare was made to 'fit' into the manners and environment of the new era. Halpern enlists support for this, choosing Thomas Stearns Eliot in particular, who he calls 'the most awesome of the modernists'.[9] He goes on further to assert that

> …T.S. Eliot established the basic protocols for twentieth-century Shakespeare criticism – most centrally perhaps, in his use of anthropological methods and themes.[10]

Halpern quotes Eliot in an essay in *Nation and Athenaeum* entitled 'The Beating of a Drum', on 6 October 1923, when he says that 'Modernism succeeded in inventing a "primitive" Shakespeare', a notion with which is examined later.

Halpern touches on the problem of assessing Shakespeare's relevance in the new times, a question addressed by many and fully answered by none. An example of the adaptability of Shakespeare is given by Halpern to make the point:

> While Shakespeare's Roman plays provided Marxists like Brecht with a model for class struggle, they allowed figures as ideologically

[8] *Ibid.* p. 2-3.
[9] *Ibid,* p. 1.
[10] *Ibid.* p, 16.

> diverse as T.S. Eliot, Wyndham Lewis and Orson Welles to ponder the crises of liberal culture brought on by monopoly capitalism, economic failure, mass politics and mass culture.[11]

Earlier, he also says that 'Shakespeare was, in fact, a favourite of both left and right in the age of mass politics.'[12] This theme is examined and extended later.

Shakespeare among the Moderns provides this thesis with an insight of a scholar's review of the phenomenon of Modernism and how Shakespeare, sometimes highly fancifully, albeit not by Halpern himself, was made to suit it and the times in which it flourished. Halpern also draws attention to the continuous divergence of Shakespeare criticism vis à vis Shakespeare in performance, specifically in the inter-war period, marking it as an extraordinary phenomenon, saying:

> Within Shakespeare criticism, as opposed to Shakespeare production, explicitly primitivist or anthropological approaches disappear in the decades after the 1930s.[13]

Although this assertion may not be strictly accurate, given, for example, G. Wilson Knight's *The Wheel of Fire* of 1949, discussed later, Halpern's focus on the period as an unprecedented challenge to the manners of the past is uncompromising.[14]

Mulhern and *Scrutiny*

Francis Mulhern, in his 1979 book, *The Moment of 'Scrutiny'*, views the inter-war period from a different perspective from that of Halpern, whilst agreeing its 'phenomenal' nature. Mulhern does not dwell much upon Shakespeare, but his discussion on the period leading to the first edition of *Scrutiny* in 1932 provides this thesis with commentary and opinions which can be contrasted with those of other

[11] *Ibid.* p. 52.
[12] *Ibid.* p. 52.
[13] *Ibid,* p. 37,
[14] G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire* (London, Methuen, 1949)

writers.[15] The journal *Scrutiny* is portrayed by Mulhern as a bastion against cultural mediocrity in an environment where the expanding *bourgeoisie* threatened to overwhelm all that was intellectually rigorous, carefully defined and refined. Mulhern asserts that '*Scrutiny's* most pressing task was to undertake an investigation of the contemporary world'[16]. It can however, be discerned that he saw it in a more active role as a medium for Frank Raymond Leavis, the General Editor of *Scrutiny*, to pursue an aggressive prosecution of the case against standardisation and what would be called by Ivor Armstrong Richards, 'levelling down', or as Mulhern puts it 'the cultural sterility of the production line'.[17] He discusses various cultural movements in Europe and concludes that England is lacking intellectual initiatives and that *Scrutiny* might have remedied the situation up to a point, saying,

> The objective of the journal was to forge an intellectual stratum that did not exist in England: an intelligentsia of the 'classic' type, cohesive, independent and critical of the conventional purposes of its society.[18]

The problem which Mulhern acknowledges and rationalises is that of the conflict between mass markets and mass cultures on the one hand, and a perceived need to protect and retain all that is worthy of intellectual appraisal and moral value on the other. These notions provide an area of engagement in this thesis which ultimately challenges some of Mulhern's conclusions.

Mulhern provides a map and compass for this thesis inasmuch as he sets out the background which led to *Scrutiny,* and then shows its direction in relationship to the prevailing cultural and social environment. The same is true up to a point in Chris

[15] Francis Mulhern, *The Moment of Scrutiny* (London: NLB, 1979)
[16] Mulhern, p. 48
[17] *Ibid.* p. 49.
[18] *Ibid*, p. 77.

Baldick's *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, published four years after Mulhern, in 1983.

Baldick and Criticism

As with Mulhern, Baldick did not concentrate upon Shakespeare particularly, but provides a view of the background to England and the study of English, with an emphasis, as far as the inter-war years are concerned, upon the works of such as F.R. and Q.D. Leavis, I.A. Richards and the English Association and its supporters. The optimistic notion that cultural enlightenment can be available to all is dismissed as unattainable, or perhaps even undesirable, giving way ultimately to the more practicable goal of the provision of higher standards of education, an area of particular interest to the Leavises and to Richards.

Chapters six, seven and eight of *The Social Mission of English Criticism* are of particular relevance to this thesis. They are entitled respectively: 'Literary Critical Consequences of the Peace: Richards' Mental League of Nations', 'The Leavises: Armed against the World', and 'A Common Pursuit: Some Conclusions'. Here, Baldick highlights the threats to Shakespeare if his study were to be left to reactionaries in the new age, but he also highlights the difficulties in making Shakespeare 'fit' into that age. Whilst discussing the works of G. Wilson Knight and Lionel Charles Knights in the 1930s as helping in 'the dethronement of Bradleian 'character' in Shakespeare criticism, Baldick concerns himself with the nature of Shakespeare criticism in the period as increasingly opaque to the general reader, a theme examined below from varying standpoints.[19]

[19] *Ibid. p.* 198.

Shakespeare and the Changing Times.

In *The Shakespeare Revolution* by John.L. Styan, published in 1977, the author offers a notion which recurs at various points in his text:

> Could the Shakespeare of the stage and the study have been the same man, the plays the same plays? The Shakespeare industry branched in such different directions that it scarcely seemed to have the same root.[20]

Although the reader is left with the idea of a 'Shakespeare industry' undefined, and the number of 'different directions' unresolved, Styan proposes a 'revolution', a notion which this thesis examines in a number of areas. My thesis challenges Styan on certain points, arguing that if there *was* a revolution in the strict meaning of the word, then that revolution was brought about to a certain and definable extent by extraneous factors which were largely absent from previous turning-points in the history of Shakespeare study and performance. To do this it is necessary to acknowledge the works of others including Gary Taylor's *Reinventing Shakespeare* of 1991, especially in his chapter entitled 'Goodbye to all that', which deals specifically with the 1930s.[21]

Styan and Taylor's differing conclusions on Shakespeare in the period provide the thesis with a key area of examination. Styan discusses a 'revolution in Shakespeare's fortunes', whilst not actually pointing to a decline.[22] Taylor meanwhile, in another text, an essay titled 'The Incredible Shrinking Bard', states that

> According to my measurements, Shakespeare's reputation peaked in the reign of Queen Victoria, and is now shrinking.[23]

In contrast to the sixty years or so which is covered in *The Shakespeare Revolution,* the subtitle of Taylor's book is *A Cultural History from the Restoration to*

[20] J.L. Styan, *The Shakespeare Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 1.
[21] Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare* (London: Vintage, 1991)
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] Gary Taylor, 'The Incredible Shrinking Bard', in *Shakespeare and Appropriation* ed. by Christy Desnet and Robert Sawyer (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 197-205 (p. 197).

the Present, and is therefore unable to focus on the inter-war period in any detail. Its unusual over-riding theme however, that of Shakespeare as a gradually failing cultural force, connects to one of the main aims of this thesis: a reassessment of Shakespeare's cultural status in a time of unprecedented change. Hugh Grady, also writing in 1991, takes a neutral view of the decline versus ascent argument in his introduction to *The Modernist Shakespeare,* but is critical of the weight of, he alleges, the spurious disputations of, particularly, the 1920s, remarking upon 'the unmanageable bulk and contention, the folly and arrogance, of so much critical discourse' on Shakespeare.[24]

Grady appears to see little area of conflict on the subject of Shakespeare's position in the cultural hierarchy, castigating the 'disintegrators' of the 1920s, welcoming the ascent of the new bibliographers, and applauding the rise of the professional academic critics in an era conveniently bounded by Romanticism on one side, and Post-Modernism on the other. Grady acknowledges that Ernest K. Chambers and Walter W. Greg may have formed a dual nemesis for the disintegrating factions, but they do not entirely disprove the disintegrating thesis. This is an area of close relevance to this thesis, and issue is taken with Grady's conclusion that:

> The defeat of the disintegrators by the new bibliographers was a major step, leading to a paradigm shift in Shakespeare studies.[25]

on the basis that there were many other factors which would have contributed to any 'paradigm shift' which may have occurred.

Many of the books discussed on Shakespeare criticism written during the period, suggest dissatisfaction, especially among younger writers, with traditional approaches exemplified by such as Bradley and Raleigh *et al.* Such an attitude could be thought of as unsurprising, given the tendency of younger people to oppose

[24] Hugh Grady, *The Modernist Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 1.
[25] *Ibid*, p. 74.

tradition as a matter of routine. This might however, be an underestimation of some of the younger scholars who came to promote, and often lead what became known eventually, in 1941, as 'New Criticism'. Derek Traversi, for example, was twenty-six when he wrote *An Approach to Shakespeare* in 1938; his opening thesis, taken from the first page states that

> Modern Shakespeare criticism presents a curious, not to say in some respects, a contradictory picture. It is impossible not to feel, at this date [1938] that the great tradition of the nineteenth century – running from Goethe and Coleridge to Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy* – long ago reached something like the limits of its usefulness.[26]

This idea of an 'end' of 'old' Shakespeare criticism has occupied later twentieth and twenty-first century writers, including those mentioned above. John Joughin however, writing nearly forty years later, suggests that this was nothing new, contending that Shakespeare study is bound to change to suit the circumstances:

> …Shakespeare has, ever since the seventeenth century, been constituted and reconstituted, fashioned and refashioned to serve political and ideological ends.[27]

The thesis seeks to establish what 'ends', if any, are being served in the inter-war years or to what extent Traversi *et al* were influenced by politics or any other ideology other than that of the need for a newly reinforced academic rigour.

The area of Shakespeare criticism in the inter-war years is so crowded with contributors that there is no definitive commentary on all of the works involved. In his essay in *Shakespeare Survey* 4, entitled 'Fifty Years of Shakespeare Criticism', Kenneth Muir discusses as many writers as practicable in the restricted space of the journal. Whilst excluding bibliographical and textual works entirely, he nevertheless

[26] D.A. Traversi, *An Approach to Shakespeare* (London: Sands and Company, 1938), p. 1.
[27] John J. Joughin, *Shakespeare and National Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 21.

manages to show the arguments and trends of the inter-war years by allocating to each of the many critics reviewed, a salient aspect of their writings.[28] Whilst this thesis is not intended as a history of literary criticism of the period, Muir's progress through the directory of prominent writers, provides a comprehensive survey, uninterrupted by anecdote or other distracting verbiage. Muir's essay is also free from bias, although his later book, *Contrasts and Controversies,* of 1985, questions the established critics of both page and stage in the inter-war years, dwelling, as do so many others, on the 'relevance' of Shakespeare in an era when perhaps ghosts and fairies were thought anachronistic, and audiences which were expecting to see and hear depictions of 'real' life or, the diametrically opposite, of complete escapism in a modern context.

Muir does discuss the 'disintegration arguments' (q.v.) but, as said, does not dwell upon textual matters, whereas Michael Taylor's 2001 book, *Shakespeare Criticism in the Twentieth Century* maintains that it is the texts themselves which guided criticism, especially in this period, saying

> The difference in Shakespeare criticism between the twentieth century and the centuries preceding it, is paradigmatically signalled by an overwhelming awareness by critics in this country of the instability of Shakespeare's texts.[29]

Taylor's thesis rests upon '…the momentousness of the twentieth-century discovery that all Shakespeare studies are built on the shifting sands of textual indeterminacy,' a notion which is questioned in the light of other contributions of the day.[30] Also challenged is Taylor's insistence that the instability of the texts was a discovery of the twentieth century, or that the majority of critics in the 1920s and 1930s gave the

[28] Kenneth Muir, 'Fifty Years of Shakespeare Criticism: 1900-1950, *Shakespeare Survey* 4 (1951), 1-25
[29] Michael Taylor, *Shakespeare Criticism in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 8.
[30] *Ibid.* p. 10.

matter any measure of importance in their deliberations, given the evidence which is shown in chapter two of this thesis. It is true that Taylor's thesis could aid this one, in that the 'distrust of tradition' in my title appears to be supported by him. Although it is tempting to recruit him as a supporter, it will be seen that the textual arguments or 'discoveries' may not have played the role which my title implies. Textual instability and disintegration are core elements of Grace Iopollo's 1991 book, *Revising Shakespeare*, in which Ioppolo discusses what might be called the 'battles of the academics' of the period, although her book covers much ground, from John Heminge and Henry Condell to the present day.[31] This thesis draws upon Iopollo's commitment to a balanced view of revision, combined with a disdain for what she sees as the unnecessary diversions caused by Chambers *et al* in the 1924 'disintegration' conflicts amongst literary critics and textual scholars.

As this thesis seeks to link the progressive changes in the assessments, attitudes and study of Shakespeare with the changing nature of society, it is necessary to keep the reader focused on the salient features which signalled or prompted such change. There are two texts which have especially contributed much data in this respect. The first of these is Sydney Pollard's *The Development of the British Economy 1914-1967*, published in 1969, in which such areas as demographic change, employment, transport and communication are discussed, and also in which those statistics which were available at the time are listed. Pollard does however, tend towards abstract generalisations which others refute. An example is when he states that

> [Britain]…failed to take part in the world boom of 1925-1929, and then sank, with the rest of the world, into the 1930s [and] pessimism began to

[31] Grace Ioppolo, *Revising Shakespeare* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1991)

> take the upper hand.[32]

Pollard's own data tend towards a denial of this statement which is also challenged in John Stevenson and Chris Cook's *Britain in the Depression: Society and Politics 1929-1939*, published in 1994, in which they discuss 'the mythology of the thirties', pointing out the errors of those who have sought to label that decade as one of unremitting gloom.[33] A point which is vital to the main arguments of this thesis is the fact that whereas Britain suffered from a depression in the decade, its effects were not felt across the whole socio-economic range. What will emerge in fact from the following chapters is that the effects of the depression varied considerably by geography, industry and socio-economic position, and that the emerging middle-classes, particularly in areas of industrial growth, benefited greatly in the decade. The expanding newspaper, automobile and entertainment industries were examples of where mass consumerism diverted attention, time, and disposable income from traditional outlets to new ones at a pace which had never been previously experienced even during the Industrial Revolution of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The argument of the link between cultural, economic and social change is important to this thesis, as is the specific nature of the period under review. Patrick O'Brien's paper, *Britain's Economy between the Wars: A Survey of a Counter-revolution in Economic History,* helps to identify some of those links. In the introduction to his paper, O'Brien identifies the period as unprecedented, saying

> …this brief and unique period of economic history is best depicted as an interlude in Britain's inevitable decline from its pinnacle of world economic power; and that the emphasis afforded by economists of all

[32] Sydney Pollard, *The Development of the British Economy 1914-1967* (London: Edward Arnold, 1969), p. 92.
[33] John Stevenson and Chris Cook, *Britain in the Depression* (London: Longman, 1994), p. 10.

> persuasions to discussions of policy…lacks historical perspective and is often politically naïve.[34]

Whilst hesitating to comment upon allegedly 'politically naïve' economic historians, this thesis engages with many of O'Brien's views concerning the nature of the times and the effect of them upon those sectors of the population involved in the structural changes which impacted upon the main areas of concentration. O'Brien provides material for discussion concerning such matters as the economic revisionist versus Keynesian interpretations of the inter-war years, and the effects upon the economy of coalition government. Noreen Branson and Margot Heinemann also do not fall into the trap of dismissing the 1930s as a time of blanket depression. In their book, *Britain in the Nineteen Thirties* of 1971, they engage with the notion of a country which is divided socially, politically and culturally, and about which any debate on the circumstances of the population at large has to be specific about which parts of the population are under discussion, and where they are located.[35]

Another theme of the thesis is what I have described as the *embourgeoisement* of English society which, although having its possible origins well in the past was, I claim, accelerated exponentially in the inter-war years due to the unique juxtaposition of certain social, economic and political circumstances. Raymond Williams's *The Long Revolution* of 1961 provides insight into some areas of concentration, particularly on the rise of the popular press, and the effects of changes to previously held notions of the functional responsibilities of universities.[36] Reba N. Sofer traces the rise of the middle-classes to an earlier time in the nineteenth century, but in

[34] Patrick O'Brien, 'Britain's Economy between the Wars: A Survey of a Counter-revolution in Economic History', *Past and Present* 115 (1987), 107-130 (p. 107).
[35] Noreen Branson and Margot Heinemann, *Britain in the Nineteen Thirties* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1971)
[36] Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961)

Discipline and Power: The University, History, and the making of an English Elite 1870-1930, attributes change in the twentieth century more to politics than social or economic development.[37] Her book of 1994, also avoids the mythologies of the times, and presents the reader with both thesis and antithesis, particularly regarding the evolving democratisation of Britain.

The subject of universities and their role in the period is linked in the text of the thesis to the developing educational progress of the times and the consequentially changing attitudes to Shakespeare. The latter relies to a point upon Andrew Murphy's *Shakespeare in Print,* which not only catalogues all of the editions of Shakespeare prior to and during the period, but also provides a commentary which discusses, amongst other things, the nature and the aspirations of editors and publishers. This in turn, is of interest in the light of actions within education which followed the Newbolt Report of 1921, and which are considered in S.J. Curtis's *The History of Education in Great Britain* of 1967.

The Stage

Although this thesis is concerned with Shakespeare in performance on stage, radio and on film, it is only peripherally concerned with performance criticism. Similarly, whilst there is an abundance of memoir, reminiscence and anecdote on the theatre, particularly by actors and directors, this is only of passing concern. The concentration is upon what actually happened in the three areas of performance and, more crucially, why it happened and what the consequences were in the period. Biographies and autobiographies, such as Donald Wolfit's *First Interval* of 1954, Robert Atkins's *Unfinished Autobiography* of 1994, and John Gielgud's *An Actor and*

[37] Reba N. Sofer, *Discipline and Power: The University, History, and the Making of an English Elite, 1870-1930* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994)

his Time, of 1979 are treated with caution in view of the likelihood that their affection for the subject clouds precision on it. They are however useful, sometimes unwitting testimony to the nature of the theatre in the period, particularly where commercial influences initiated irreversible changes to the traditions of the theatre, especially in London.

Richard Huggett's *Binkie Beaumont: Eminence Grise of the West End Theatre*, published in 1989 is an exception to the rule of caution, providing insights into the nature of the mounting commercialism of the times and its effects upon the theatre. This theme is refined by Denis Kennedy in *Looking at Shakespeare*, where the modern audiences of the period are seen as unsure witnesses to possibly unwelcome changes. Specifically engaged is Kennedy's assertion, in this case in connection with the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, that

> …the theatre's root difficulty as a producer of Shakespeare was a distrust of the modern, whether in acting, interpretation, or in design, in favour of an unexamined reliance upon nineteenth-century stage traditions and local colour.[38]

Kennedy's book encourages further examination of the nature of audiences, not only in respect of Shakespeare's plays, but also of those of the new writers who were to dominate the West End in the period. Kennedy, as with Halpern and Grady, appears to suspect that the audiences of the time comprised mainly mature people who were probably conservative, and who viewed innovation, wherever it appeared, with suspicion. At first encounter, this appears to be at odds with one of the main contentions of this thesis, namely a '*distrust* of tradition', but it will be shown that whilst audiences for Shakespeare, particularly at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre,

[38] Dennis Kennedy, *Looking at Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 121.

tended towards tradition and conformity, the new audiences for the increasingly commercial West End, did not.

In the absence of hard data, and of objective and unbiased reports of the audiences of the time, an examination of the changing fortunes of the London theatres, with which this thesis is concerned, depends heavily upon performance records showing which plays were running at which theatres and for how long. The various schedules in this connection are compiled using mainly the work of J.P. Wearing's two volumes covering the period, *The London Stage 1920-29* and *1930-39*. In a work of such breadth, it was not surprising to find that minor corrections were necessary to Wearing's listings, using issues of *The Stage* to do so.

The Old Vic theatre features prominently as anomalous to the commercial trends of other theatres on the main circuit of the West End. Accordingly, close attention has been paid to those works which, anecdotal or biased as they may be, contribute impressions and information which may be used with some certainty. Among these works are included Tyrone Guthrie's *A Life in Theatre,* published in 1961, Peter Roberts' *The Old Vic Story* of 1976, E. Harcourt Williams' *Old Vic Saga,* 1949, and John Gielgud's *An Actor and his Time,* of 1979. The other theatre which championed the plays of Shakespeare was the Open Air Theatre in Regent's Park about which, compared to the Old Vic, little has been written. Robert Atkins was the theatre's own champion whose enthusiasm for it was not recorded in detail. George Rowell however, edited *Robert Atkins: An Unfinished Biography* in 1994, which provided insights into the fortunes and the management of the theatre at first hand.

The changing social and political environment is a continuous theme of the thesis, and is discussed in various essays in the book *British Theatre between the Wars,* edited by Clive Barker and Maggie B. Gale in 2000. Especially relevant to this

thesis is Barker's own essay, 'Theatre and Society: The Edwardian Legacy, The First World War and the Inter-war Years', in which both the conservative and the revolutionary factions are followed throughout the twenty years.[39] Another essay, Tony Howard's 'Blood on the Bright Young Things: Shakespeare in the 1930s', provides the thesis with an opportunity for contrasting the views of those concerned with a perceived degeneration during that decade, to others who saw it as a time of opportunity and social mobility.[40]

Radio

As far as radio is concerned, the thesis, as with stage performance, does not offer qualitative opinions on the performances of Shakespeare's plays, but is concerned with programming and types of production. The advent of nationally available radio programmes from 1922 and the subsequent exponential growth of the medium up to the beginning of World War II, has not produced a wide range of writing. Val Gielgud's *British Radio Drama* of 1957 provides a first-hand account of the problems and opportunities with which he had to deal as Controller of BBC drama.[41] His account provokes a discussion on the ways in which Shakespeare was adapted for the medium, prompting in this thesis an examination of Gielgud's and the BBC's planning and motives. Asa Briggs produced volume number one of *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom: The Birth of Broadcasting*, in 1961, which is used here as a main source of reference but is supported by an unpublished thesis of 1997, for the degree of Master of Letters by Mairé Jean Steadman of the

[39] Clive Barker and Maggie B. Gale, eds., *British Theatre between the Wars, 1918-1939*) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
[40] Tony Howard, 'Blood on the Bright Young Things: Shakespeare in the 1930s', in *British Theatre between the Wars, 1918-1939*, eds., Clive Barker and Maggie B. Gale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000)
[41] Val Gielgud, *British Radio Drama 1922-1956* (London: Harrap and Company, 1957)

University of Birmingham, 'The Presentation of Shakespeare's Plays on BBC Radio'. Steadman also provides evidence of the apparently casual manner in which the BBC catalogued and archived broadcast material in the early years, thus depriving researchers of any definitive scheduling records.

Film

Shakespeare performance on film, specifically for talking pictures post 1928, is well catalogued. Kenneth S. Rothwell's *A History of Shakespeare on Screen,* the 2004, second edition, is used in the thesis as a basic reference. As, however, this thesis is more concerned with Shakespeare on film in the social, political and economic context of the period, two books provide material for discussion on the market and on the audiences. The first of these is John Collick's *Shakespeare, Cinema and Society* of 1989, in which the author recognises the societal influences which were to produce the market for moving pictures, and eventually talking-pictures. The second is David A. Cook's *A History of Narrative Film* of 1990, second edition, which provokes an area of discussion on the influential financial and marketing forces which may have ultimately decided the direction of cinema from 1933 onwards.

Thesis Structure

The thesis is organised into four chapters of specific areas of research, followed by a concluding chapter. Chapter one is concerned with the political, social and cultural environment of the period, and the years shortly preceding it. It is axiomatic that, when discussing change, a recurring factor in this thesis, comparison is necessary in order to evaluate either the degree or the effect of such change. Thus, the first chapter provides a background of the social and cultural environments which

developed as a result of the war, or from movements and ideologies which preceded it or emerged and developed as the period progressed. The chapter identifies first some popular views of Shakespeare and then the views of scholars and academics in the years before the war, which, in many cases were still held after it. Whether or not those values were relevant to the emerging society of the 1920s is discussed against a background of political instability, changing fashions and markets, and the social changes brought about by government on the one hand and by exponential technological changes on the other. The chapter subsequently moves to the matter of cultural influences which emerged either from movements originating around the turn of the century which were accelerated by the effects of war, or which emerged as new movements in the period itself. The objective here is to accentuate the over-riding requirement to see Shakespeare both in context, and as either under threat from new cultural influences, or whether such influences are ineffective, given the advantage which Shakespeare had as a commodity of traditional cultural value.

A specific area of examination is the phenomenon of the rise of the middle-classes, which recurs throughout the thesis as a continuously growing influence upon many aspects of politics, the economy and the arts. The chapter identifies the demographic shift which was apparent at the commencement of the period of study, and which was maintained throughout it. This shift was welcomed by those involved in commercial undertakings which would ultimately benefit, but was not viewed as cordially by those scholars, intellectuals, authors and dramatists who considered the *embourgeoisement* process to be a malign influence upon the nation's cultural well-being.

This rise of the middle classes is shown in the first chapter to be concomitant with the rise of technology, a phenomenon which is referred to at times in subsequent

chapters. The combined effects of demographic and technological changes referred to only in passing by writers such as Baldick, Mulhern *et al,* is argued to be the prime driving force which dictated the direction of popular culture and the mass markets, not always to the benefit of traditional cultural standards and activities, at least according to the view of many of the new writers of the times.

Chapter two begins by tracing briefly the evolution of Shakespeare criticism and of Shakespeare as a symbolic cultural reference-point up to the beginning of the period. This is a necessary contextualising introduction to the chapter which prepares the way for the understanding of the later challenges, not only to the status of Shakespeare, but also to the fundamental elements of criticism. The inter-war years as a time of novelty and innovation having been established in the preceding chapter, this one identifies areas of literary criticism and correlating factors which made this era a time of intense literary and scholarly activity.

The so-called 'disintegration' of Shakespeare is discussed as particularly apposite, given the tendency towards distrust, analysis and reformation which was demonstrated elsewhere. The questions regarding authorship, textual instabilities and bardolatry are reviewed with the rise of new approaches in criticism, poetry and drama. Modernists and Modernism are seen alongside the views of those writers and critics who, whilst not subscribing to any revolutionary trends in criticism, advocated a more liberal approach to the interpretation of Shakespeare at a time when rigid, traditional approaches were questioned with increasing frequency.

The works and views of contemporary writers are discussed, with a broad view taken of their place in one 'school' or another. The schools are not rigid classifications, but seek to place the commentators of the day into such loosely identifiable groups as bardolatrists, liberal campaigners, educationalists or 'new

critics', whose conflicting, but sometimes overlapping views are compared and contrasted. Reference is made, for example, to Andrew Cecil Bradley, as a character critic or biographer of Shakespeare, into which school also falls Lytton Strachey or Sidney Lee. As writers on the field of imagery and symbolism, the work of Caroline Spurgeon, Una Ellis-Fermor and G. Wilson Knight is discussed, but the avoidance of rigid classification is exemplified by the inclusion of William Empson who, in *Essays on Shakespeare* included the essay 'Hunt the Symbol', whilst certainly not belonging to any 'Symbolist School' of Shakespeare criticism.[42] It could be said that G. Wilson Knight was beyond classification. Likewise, a loose conglomeration of critics including as examples T.S. Eliot, Lascelles Abercrombie and L.C. Knights, might be seen as belonging to a school which considered the plays of Shakespeare as artefacts; products to be considered without reference to any extraneous facts or opinions on matters such as history or biography, plot, setting or authorship. The adherents and promoters of the 'New Criticism', as it was eventually called, are discussed and argued as being the representatives of the new post-war age; the avant-garde which, like the abstract painters and sculptors and experimental musical composers, defined the new modern and Modernist era.

Chapter two is not intended as a history of literary criticism, but seeks to uncover a view of the activity of critics against a background of change and volatility. In this respect, an examination of the leaders of the various movements of the era is included. Coteries and factions within the literary establishment are discussed as exemplars of the restlessness which pervaded the times, and in many instances, as combatants against their own perception of a national drift to a philistinism which they feared, threatened society. The underlying theme of chapter two is that of

[42] William Empson, 'Hunt the Symbol' in *Essays on Shakespeare*, ed. by David Pirie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 231-243.

disagreement, division and reassessment. Such factors have undoubtedly affected the study and consumption of Shakespeare before, but not it is claimed, as potently as in the inter-war years, precisely because of the environment in which they are placed. Chapter two is placed immediately after the chapter on the new political, social and cultural environment in order that the contextual content of the first chapter is more easily referenced. The connection between such context and its effects on literary criticism has not been a regular feature of other writing. The connection in chapters three and four are more obvious.

Chapter three acknowledges the effects of government legislation and the changing educational establishment and extra-government organisations upon the study and reception of Shakespeare. It also discusses the changing attitudes to literature and to Shakespeare by the ancient and the Victorian universities, and the new attitudes of the 'civic' universities which were founded in the early years of the twentieth century, The over-riding theme of the chapter is that of a recognition of the new position which English language and literature occupied as a result of the initiatives taken by government and by independent bodies. Educational reform, prior to, as well as during the period, is seen as particularly relevant inasmuch as those reforms, activated around the turn of the century, provided new directions for the new generation of writers which flourished in the inter-war years. Similarly, in respect of the promotion of English and of Shakespeare, the creation of the British Empire Shakespeare Society, the English Speaking Union and the English Association are placed in context.

The Newbolt Report of 1921 is examined and evaluated, not only in its role as promoter of English, but also in connection with the study and promotion of Shakespeare. The report is considered as a turning-point for both, and the support for

it, together with its implications, is assessed not in the long-term but in the context of its relevance to the immediate period which followed, and the opinions of it which were elicited from scholar and critic. Included in chapter three is the introduction of new editions of Shakespeare which, it is argued, were published either as a response to the new social and educational initiatives which followed the war, or as a reaction against them. Reference is also made to the increasingly influential role of the popular press and magazines on the emerging mass markets. The phenomenon of a newly enfranchised, literate population, with levels of disposable time and income not enjoyed by previous generations was viewed as either an opportunity or a threat, depending upon the social or cultural standpoint of the commentator. A discussion takes place which seeks to establish such standpoints, and ultimately to determine their influence upon the study and consumption of Shakespeare in all forms.

Chapter four examines Shakespeare in performance on the London stage, on radio from 1922 onwards, and in the cinema from1928. It may be helpful if these three specific areas of study are defined and explained; the reader is also invited to refer above to the first sentence of this introduction. The chapter is not a history of Shakespeare in performance on the stage of the period, or any measurement of the quality of the productions. Thousands of books have covered this. Performance reviews are only relevant to the thesis as explanatory background, and are mentioned infrequently. An aim of the fourth chapter is to examine the Shakespeare 'market' in the context of the changing times, and to discuss the variously fluctuating directions and disposition of that market against a background of increased competition, especially from new playwrights. Accordingly, the stage concerned is for the much greater part, the London stage as opposed to the national, for reasons which are described in the text of the chapter. The reasons can however, be summarised by

saying that the London stage defined by theatre in Schedule 1, provides the only comprehensive area of study which includes performance data, appropriate comparisons between the traditional and the modern, and a properly representative proportion of the population to enable a reasonable assessment of the fortunes of Shakespeare productions vis a vis the others. Shakespeare performance on the stage outside London is not entirely excluded, as it was considered eccentric to omit any mention of the Shakespeare Memorial theatre or some of the more prominent regional theatres.

In much the same way as with the stage, the section on radio is not meant as a history of it, which, as with the stage, has been covered by others, but as an assessment of how the plays of Shakespeare fared in the new medium against a background of intense competition and increasingly varied customer tastes and expectations. Unlike the section on stage productions, the section on radio deals with the national coverage as far as such a description is accurate, given the variability of such coverage especially in the early years of the medium. The subject of Shakespeare on film in this chapter is concerned only with the United Kingdom market, and with talking pictures in particular. I decided to exclude the thousands of Shakespeare's plays, or more accurately the thousands of sometimes seconds-long snippets which were produced from around 1899 until the advent of talking pictures in 1928. A history of Shakespeare on film might be obliged to include such work, but the concern of chapter four is with Shakespeare in the context of new manners, markets and technologies. The last of these produced an opportunity for those who had not heard Shakespeare spoken on the stage, to hear the words in another kind of theatre, and to decide whether or not to repeat the experience after their first visit.

The market for the plays of Shakespeare on film is discussed against a background of intensive competition from films mainly from the United States, which either reflected the modern times or presented a view of earlier times in a romanticised or glamourised way. The paucity of films of Shakespeare's plays between 1930 and 1939 is discussed with a view to establishing both the reasons for such paucity and the marketing imperatives which perforce drove the studio managers. A particular case-study of the Max Reinhardt/Wilhelm Dieterle production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* sets a paradigm for the era and the place of Shakespeare's films within it.

The thesis does not concern itself with deliberate adaptations of Shakespeare on film, such as Lowell Sherman's *Morning Glory* of 1933, an American seventy-four minute film based loosely on *Hamlet*, or Walter Reisch's *Men Are Not Gods*, of 1936, based upon *Othello*. The word 'deliberate' is meant to imply that the producers of such films were overt in their intention to avoid confusing the audience by the application of Shakespeare's legitimate title to a film which proves to be only vaguely related to it. It could be argued, and has been, that all films with the titles of Shakespeare's plays before World War II were, in fact, adaptations specially devised for the screen. Whilst recognising the argument, this thesis accepts the Shakespeare films of the 1930s to be legitimate efforts to bring 'authentic' Shakespeare to the public, whatever the opposing thoughts of the Shakespeare 'purists' of the day. An informative view on the subject of adaptation is given in Courtney Lehman's 2007 essay, 'What is a Shakespeare Adaptation, or Shakespeare du Jour', reproduced in *Shakespeares after Shakespeare*, edited by Richard Burt.[43]

[43] Courtney Lehmann, 'What is a Film Adaptation? or, Shakespeare du Jour', in *Shakespeares After Shakespeare* ed. by Richard Burt (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2007), 74-80.

Summary

One of the influences identified in the first paragraph of this introduction was the over-riding threat, or perhaps opportunity, of a 'distrust of tradition' particularly in the areas of culture and politics. The other factor which was identified was to what extent, if any, the 'cultural status and reception' of Shakespeare was affected by the new post-war environment. The over-riding influence of the period 1919 to 1939 has been identified at the outset as one of change: cultural, political, social and technological. As the words 'change' and 'tradition' recur throughout, the question which is examined frequently, posited in one form or another, is whether Shakespeare represents tradition or possesses sufficient substance to adapt and thrive in, if not an alien, then a potentially threatening and changing environment. Hindsight, and reference to some of the works cited above, may be thought to render these questions irrelevant, given the fact that here in the twenty-first century, Shakespeare appears to be thriving at a level of recognition, appreciation and study which many from previous times would probably have considered highly satisfactory. Such an argument, however, fails to appreciate the momentum provided for the promotion of Shakespeare in a previous era, when state-subsidy of the arts was virtually unknown, when social instability was a prime concern for the public and the government, and when technological innovation threatened the traditional performing arts in ways not previously encountered or even envisaged.

The following chapters identify those strengths of tradition of the Shakespeare 'brand' which supported it throughout the period, and also the perceived weaknesses of what was seen by some as an old, tired offering in an age of unprecedented expansion and innovation. What will also be shown is whether or not Shakespeare's proponents and enthusiasts, scholars and performers, could take

advantage of the opportunities which educational reform and technological development provided, or whether they succumbed to the threats which existed from demographic change and entirely new forms of competition engendered by commercial imperatives. It is worth reinforcing the points made above about what this thesis is *not*, by reiterating that it is not a social or economic history of the inter-war years, of literary criticism, of education or of the performance of Shakespeare on stage, radio or in film. All of these areas contribute to the argument that the years between the two world wars produced a cultural, social, economic and technological environment in which the cultural status and reception of Shakespeare reached a turning-point which would direct the study and reception of Shakespeare to the present day.

Chapter One

The Times and the Manners: Shakespeare and the new Political, Social and Cultural Environment

A leading article by Harold Spender in the *Daily Chronicle* of 16 June 1920 contained the headlines, 'Shakespeare and Bolshevism' and 'Lenin and Jack Cade'. The first part of the text of the article continued, 'Really is it not amazing that in this boisterous extravaganza of the sixteenth century, Shakespeare should have anticipated so accurately the madness of the twentieth?'[44] Leaving aside the claim that the second part of Shakespeare's *King Henry VI* is a 'boisterous extravaganza', it is Spender's reference to Shakespeare's alleged anticipation of events three-hundred years after his death which merits examination. Spender, and many others, was in his enthusiasm, making Shakespeare 'fit' a modern context. The 'madness' to which Spender refers was World War I and the disintegration or destruction of the old European régimes. Whether Shakespeare's implied prescience was a fanciful concept or not, there existed throughout the period between the wars an apparently urgent need by some writers and scholars to show by whatever stretch of imagination, that Shakespeare was somehow 'relevant' or 'current'. This begs the question as to whether or not Shakespeare was ever 'relevant', but if this was seen as a *sine qua non* for Shakespeare in post-war Britain, the question must also be asked how the circumstances from 1919 onwards were different from any other.

H.B. Charlton, in a speech to the Leeds branch of the English Association on 25 January 1929 said:

> In these democratic days, there would appear to be a singular tactlessness in any attempt to do honour to Shakespeare's name by recalling his political opinions.

[44] *Daily Chronicle*, 16 June 1920, p. 3.

> There is nothing in him the average man of today finds harder to forgive than his contempt for the populace…for Shakespeare, in his blindness, democracy was simple ochlocracy, and a tribune of the people could be no other than a demagogue…Shakespeare's politics are indeed very like those of Coriolanus.[45]

It is unclear how Charlton could have known what the 'average man' of the times thought of Shakespeare and his politics or how Shakespeare saw democracy as mob rule, or by what leap of scholarship it was possible to base his politics on one play. Charlton was, whilst indulging his views, trying to force an argument which could neither be proved nor disproved. It is however, worth recording that Britain in 1929 had only one year previously become a properly functioning democracy in that all women over the age of twenty-one were granted a vote in general elections rather than only those over the age of thirty. Perhaps the 'ochlocracy' to which Charlton referred, could be related only to the industrial unrest of the previous seven years.

Nine years later, when a new war was being seen by some commentators as inevitable, George Bernard Shaw said

> Only those who have lived through a first-rate war, not in the field, but at home, and kept their heads, can possibly understand the bitterness of Shakespeare and Swift, who both went through this experience.[46]

In such generalizations Shaw was merely tapping into the public awareness of one past war, one possible future war, and enjoining the public to 'understand' Shakespeare on this basis. He was using the wars as a kind of readily recognized punctuation, not, as will be seen, an unusual device, and one which was and is commonly used by writers and commentators.

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[45] H.B. Charlton, 'Shakespeare, Politics and Politicians', *English Association Pamphlet* 72 (April, 1929), p. 3.
[46] G.B. Shaw, *Prefaces* (London: Odham's Press Ltd., 1938), p. 382.

The Post War Environment

When discussing wars and their aftermath, historians are generally anxious to avoid the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* argument where a war offers a clearly demarcated event in history which *must* produce change or at least show a clear result. It will be seen below that the many artistic and cultural movements under discussion pre-dated World War I, and were merely refined and developed in the following twenty or so years; but there were some post-war factors and circumstances which cannot reasonably be ascribed to anything other than the war. Just as it is important to avoid the *post hoc* argument, so is it necessary to apply the word 'unprecedented' with care, a point emphasized in the introduction. With this in mind, this thesis claims that the period which followed the war was unprecedented in the history of Britain in the sense that the times had no precedent, were unparalleled and possessed novelty which was beyond reasonable expectation.

The society which emerged in the new decade of the 1920s had experienced a casualty rate in the war of one million, with 750,000 dead, and an unknown number above this who were physically and/or mentally damaged; a truly unprecedented situation. Following a Victorian era of steady economic growth, political stability and *laissez faire* government, there now followed a time of disintegration, dissent and a succession of governments which in spite of regular intervention were unable to respond quickly enough to the social and demographic changes which were taking place at a rate which was unprecedented. As well as witnessing the demise of old régimes in Europe: the Hapsburgs, the Romanovs, the Hohenzollerns and the Ottoman Empire, British society had begun to witness the beginnings of the disintegration of the United Kingdom itself, with the Easter Uprising of 1916 and the subsequent

partition of Ireland in 1921. Those who read the financial and economic indicators of the times would also have been aware of the rise of the United States to a dominant economic position in world affairs, previously occupied by Britain, a situation which was likely to have been beyond contemplation in Victorian or even Edwardian England. The disintegration mentioned above could also be applied to some features of the British mainland. The Emergency Powers Act of 1920, making the earlier Defence of the Realm Act permanent, was joined by the Official Secrets Act of 1920, both acts accurately anticipating the civil unrest which was to follow intermittently for the next nineteen years. Although civil unrest was not a new phenomenon, the speed at which organized dissent could now be brought about, mainly due to the technological advances which had increased exponentially throughout the period, was unprecedented.

New Technologies and New Markets

The installation of telephones had been limited and sporadic before the war, but by the 1920s most business and trades-union and political offices used the new technology. Similarly, the rise of the motor car ensured mobility for a newly enfranchised sector: private motor car sales rose from 132000 in 1914 to 981000 in 1929 and to over two million by the end of the period, an increase of at least 1400%[47]. An analysis of motor car sales by socio-economic grouping is not available, but it is reasonable to assume that the growing middle-classes were the main consumer group, one which grew as the cost of living fell faster than wages in the 1930s. Overall, the cost of living index fell by more than one-third between 1920 and 1938, and, crucially during the early 1930s, prices fell faster than wages, with the result that real

[47] Sydney Pollard, *The Development of the British Economy 1914-1967* (London: Edward Arnold, 1969), p. 150.

disposable earnings rose, causing a substantial improvement in living standards[48]. An example of falling prices can be seen in the motor industry where the price of a family car fell from £259 in 1924 to £130 twelve years later.[49]

The advent of public broadcasting by the British Broadcasting Company in 1922 was an entirely novel phenomenon which via its news bulletins and current affairs programmes made millions of people aware of events which hitherto might have remained unknown to them. The number of receiving licences increased from 36000 in 1922 to 2,178,000 in 1926, and the cost of a radio receiver fell in roughly the same proportion to that of a motor car. The Electricity Supply Act of 1926 which, amongst other things, set up a centralized monopoly for the production and distribution of electricity throughout the nation, helped to ensure that by 1933, a national gridwork provided Britain with the most efficient and widest available electricity system in the world. Consumption of electricity rose fourfold between 1925 and 1939; by 1930 one house in three was wired for electricity whereas the figure for 1920 was one in seventeen.[50]

A further demonstration of the unprecedented growth in the spending power of the mass of the population is the example of the retailer Marks and Spencer in opening 129 stores between 1931 and 1935, producing a total of 258[51]. This increase, from one single store before the war would have been remarkable in the total absence of competition, but there was no shortage of that. Woolworth's, Littlewoods and small local groups of multiple retailers were also active during the period, expanding the number of outlets in order to meet the new markets.

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[48] D.H. Aldcroft, *The Inter-War Economy: Britain 1919-1939* (London: Batsford, 1970), pp. 352, 364.
[49] Pollard, p. 102.
[50] John Stevenson and Chris Cook, *Britain in the Depression* (London: Longman, 1994), p. 17.
[51] *Ibid*, p. 23.

A New Society

The above examples seek to illustrate not only the scale of changes in society, but also their range. Although the wealthier classes still retained their exclusive venues for shopping, entertaining and socializing, the middle classes, and a growing population within the working classes was able to exercise its newly acquired spending power. In spite of the fact that Britain was officially classified as in a 'Depression' in the 1930s, there remained the majority of people in work who were enjoying a style and standard of life which would have been unknown to their parents.

This change in fortunes for the masses was not met with universal delight. T.S. Eliot writing in *Criterion* said

> …we must aim to get at some real understanding of the changes which are taking place in society, an understanding which will distinguish between those which are inevitable and those which should be combated, between those which are beneficial and those which are pernicious.[52]

Eliot does not venture which changes are 'inevitable', which should be 'combated', which are 'beneficial' or 'pernicious', nor does he suggest who would legislate in the matter of defining or combating. At this point in the period, Eliot was living in privileged circumstances, and might have found it difficult to divine some 'real understanding' of what was occurring in society. It will be seen in the next chapter that he was a very complex man of shifting loyalties and opinions, and may not have been the best person to comment on what served the masses and what did not. His confusion and his sincerity however, have to be understood in the context of the times; he could not, after all, have relied on the political leaders for guidance, given the electoral and governmental perturbations of the times. Eliot was writing at a time of

[52] T.S. Eliot, 'Commentary', *Criterion Magazine* Vol, XIV, No. LIV (October, 1934), p. 90.

National Government in the United Kingdom, a system which was in operation from the election of 27 October, 1931 and which would continue in one form or another until 1945. The old political certainties of previous generations, those of the Tory and Liberal parties with their clearly expressed and differing views on such things as Free Trade, Home Rule in Ireland, and minimal intervention in public affairs, had been replaced with the uncertainties of the post-war era and the rise of the Labour Party, a populist, 'working-man's' party, and another entirely new factor within the political system.

As with much else, the traditions and styles of pre-war politics were now seen as inappropriate for governments which had to deal with a world war and the rise of Bolshevism with its concomitantly perceived threat to Britain. There was also a General Strike, the destruction of long-established industries, mass unemployment and mass migration from the north to the south of England, and from Ireland and Scotland to the rest of the world. Central solutions in a newly democratized state were seen as the only answer, to the dismay of many. Christopher Dawson, writing in 1934 said

> It is not merely that the State is becoming more centralized, but that society and culture are becoming politicized… [and there has occurred] the crushing out of religion from modern life by the sheer weight of state-inspired opinion and by the mass organization of society on a purely secular basis.[53]

A twenty-first century reading of Dawson might conclude that he was either naïve, may even have been ignorant of his environment, or that he led a life spent in only the study or the cloister. He was writing almost one year after Germany had become highly centralized, and where society and culture would become progressively more politicized. Perhaps, although he does not specifically say so in the article, he saw

[53] Christopher Dawson, 'Religion and the Totalitarian State', *Criterion Magazine* LIV (1934), p. 1.

Britain as moving in the same direction, although a brief examination of Britain's political structure compared to the German model might have convinced him otherwise. It is the title of Dawson's essay however, which leads a reader of any period to understand that he did fear the rise of totalitarianism and the demise of religion. His dystopian views are propounded further in the article when he says:

> We have already secured the nationalization and public control of broadcasting and I believe that the time is not far distant when similar methods will be applied to the control of the Press and the cinema.[54]

Whilst a modern reader might find these thoughts amusing in the light of history, it should be remembered that Italy had been a fascist state since 1922, the Soviet Union a communist one since 1917, and Germany a national socialist state from 1933. Both fascism and communism had their adherents in Britain, and there was a possibility that the country would be taken down one extreme path or the other. It could be that the country did not go down such a path, not due to some sort of national trait of even-handedness or balanced thinking, but due more to the structure of the political system which, with the shifting alliances within National Government generated hesitation and indecision. It is also possible that such hesitation and indecision meant that society, free from government impositions, could find its own cultural level, something which might be seen as desirable by some but as malignant by others. This is notably and forcefully shown in the views of I.A. Richards and F.R. and Q.D. Leavis in the next chapter. The allegedly extinct traditions of earlier times were replaced by a new era of the mass market, mass transportation, mass communication and mass unemployment. Commenting on four books on financial and economic matters, T.S. Eliot said, in *Criterion:*

> I still believe that such words as *work* and *thrift* have potent moral significance,

[54] *Ibid*, p. 11.

> though their real moral value has been distorted by the capitalist system, a distortion which seems unlikely to be straightened out in any merely socialist system. [55]

If the word 'merely' had been italicized it might suggest that Eliot believed in a mixed economy or at least one which deserved a heavy input of what would now be called 'Keynesianism'. Eliot was trying to conflate morality and politics, a philosophical conflict which existed in the times of Greece and Rome and which has not been resolved at the time of writing.

The 1930s have been discussed in many books, most of which concentrate on the negative or the sinister. Madge Garland, for example, writes of *The Indecisive Decade* in 1938, J.C. Trewin of *The Turbulent Thirties* in 1960, and Piers Brendon of *The Dark Valley* in 2001.[56] Hindsight might perhaps have provided post World War II writers with an objectivity and balance which would not have been so easy to acquire during the decade itself. The balance is restored to some extent by Stevenson and Cook, who discuss the 'popular mythology of the thirties' as being a false belief that the decade was a time of unrelenting internal conflict, poverty, unemployment and despondency.[57] Noreen Branson and Margot Heinemann also help to dispel the myth in their book of 1971, as when they say that

> …wholly new science-based industries were growing…Building (with related industries like furniture and wallpaper, as well as building materials) was also rapidly expanding. But by far the greatest increase in employment was in distribution, hotels and catering and various service industries…and these, like the newer manufacturing industries were already concentrated in the south-east and the midlands, and continued to grow there. This was the main cause of

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[55] T.S. Eliot, 'Commentary', *Criterion Magazine* Vol.XI., No.XLIII (January, 1932), p. 274.
[56] Madge Garland, *The Indecisive Decade: The World of Fashion and Entertainment in the Thirties* (London: Macdonald and Company, 1938)
J. C. Trewin, *The Turbulent Thirties* (London: Macdonald and Company, 1960)
Piers Brendon, *The Dark Valley* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2000)
[57] John Stevenson and Chris Cook, *Britain in the Depression* (London: Longman, 1994), p. 10.

growing economic prosperity and increasing population of these districts.[58]

This then, was the environment in which Shakespeare or 'Shakespeare' existed: a time of mass culture and mass markets, of shifting populations and emerging new industries, of failing old industries and technical innovation. It was an environment in which mention of 'England' provoked differing responses, depending upon location, socio-political positioning, and employment status. Returning to the original theme of this discussion; that of unprecedented change, it can be claimed that at no time in the nation's past had such an environment existed. The impact of change and innovation will be demonstrated in following chapters, but even greater influences than the social and political ones will be discussed first.

Cultural Influences

The objective of this part of the chapter is similar to the first: to provide a background, environment and context against which the cultural status of Shakespeare may be examined. Whilst the first part tends to deal mainly with palpable or quantifiable information, this section proposes that the critical and artistic treatment of Shakespeare in the period could have been, may have been, or is very likely to have been influenced by the various cultural and artistic movements which preceded it.
It has been argued that the cultural status of Shakespeare in the hundred years or so which preceded the period was that of assured stability or even growing elevation which culminated in some of the bardolatrist excesses exemplified by such as Colmer, Raleigh *et al* in the introductory chapter. The first meeting of the New Shakespere Society, under Frederick James Furnivall had met in March, 1874 and the first

[58] Noreen Branson and Margot Heinemann, *Britain in the Nineteen Thirties* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), pp. 44-45.

scholarly paper read by Frederick G. Fleay. Gary Taylor reminds his readers that in 1825, Thomas Lovell Beddoes had written of 'the honey-minutes of the year / Which make man god, and make a god – Shakespeare'. Demonstrating the international reach of the cultural status mentioned above, Heinrich Heine had said that 'even though God claims for himself the first place in creation, Shakespeare is next in line'[59]. Edward Dowden had written *Shakespere: A Critical Study of His Mind and Art*, which ran to twelve British editions between 1875 and 1901, punctuating the end of the century and the Victorian era with a tribute. Shakespeare had flourished from the Jacobean and Caroline eras of literature, through the Augustan, Romantic and Victorian, and the cultural authority of the works had not been seriously challenged from within or without, although there were stirrings among some enthusiasts with access to the press, on matters of collaboration and revision.

There had emerged however, during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, a number of artistic and cultural movements which, at first sight, did not appear to have a place for Shakespeare within their core. These movements demonstrated a distrust of tradition and, in some cases, a simultaneous distrust of the new age of invention, commercialism and mass culture. Artists and intellectuals took up varying and disparate stances on new notions and concepts of the arts, society and fast-developing heavy industrialisation. The rise of the *petit bourgeoisie* and the financial empowerment of the masses in general over the period might have signified that the old traditions of the novel, the painting, music or poetry would enjoy wider and greater approbation and acceptance. This was not in accordance with those who sought to resist the popular, the democratic and, as some

[59] Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London: Vintage, 1991),

members of the new movements saw it, the trivial, the inconsequential and the destructive.

The term 'Modernism', is a vague and generally unsatisfactory word for a wide-ranging series of often short-lived experiments in philosophy and practice in the arts which encompassed the right and the left wings of politics, and the theist and the atheist. What the Modernists did not embrace was a notion that high culture was available to all, regardless of social background, education or sensibility. Historians are unable to say exactly when modernism, originally called the *avant garde* started, but it is possible to see new attitudes to knowledge as far back as Immanuel Kant's basic philosophy. He believed that knowledge is the outcome of two factors, the senses and the understanding, and that space and time are essential conditions of knowledge, although they only exist as forms of consciousness. Kant died in 1804, but his work eschewing the revision of past knowledge in favour of new thinking and ideas was taken up and developed by such as Nietzsche and Bergson who, amongst others, distrusted Victorian positivism and certainty. Later, Schoenberg's and Stravinsky's music, Picasso's and Mondrian's paintings, James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Eliot's *The Waste Land* were to be examples of new, Modernist approaches, although there is no evidence that any of those mentioned ever regarded themselves as Modernists, possibly on the basis that the very word suggests transience.

At a time when technology had proved its effectiveness by killing so many in war, and when commercialism and mass culture had emerged after World War I, the modernist dilemma is expressed by Peter Childs:

> There were paradoxical if not opposed trends towards revolutionary and reactionary positions, fear of the new and delight at the disappearance of the old, nihilism and fanatical enthusiasm, creativity and despair.[60]

[60] Peter Childs, *Modernism* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 17.

Modernism reflected a society which appeared to be fragmented and confused: atonal music, abstract painting and sculpture, free verse and surrealist expression, served to add to the perception of the fragmentation and disintegration of a society of writers, philosophers, intellectuals and artists who were to become estranged from the masses by their own will. Modernism devolved and widened into a series of other movements. Futurism had originated in Italy early in the century. It was founded by Tommaso Marinetti who wrote the *Futurist Manifesto* in 1909. In *Le Figaro* of that year Marinetti expressed a passionate loathing of everything old, and is quoted as saying 'We want no part of it, the past, we are the young and strong Futurists'[61]. Futurism encompassed literature, art, music, sculpture and politics; Marinetti became a member of Mussolini's National Fascist Party. Here again the complexity of the organizations of the times meant that in spite of Marinetti's political affiliations, many Futurists were communists or socialists. The movement transferred to Britain as an example of the new freedoms which modern thinking could bring to architecture and the arts, but it then lost the co-operation of Wyndham Lewis whose name had been used without permission on a document issued in 1914 by Marinnetti and his English collaborator, C.R.W. Nevinson, called *Vital English Art*, a supposed 'English Futurist Manifesto'. The eventual upshot of Lewis's anger was the founding of the new, entirely British movement which Ezra Pound, Lewis's publicist, called Vorticism, which in turn generated the short-lived journal *BLAST*. The movement and the journal sought, along with the destruction of 'old thinking', to shake Britain out of its perceived 'complacent insularity' and encourage engagement with Europe. It was largely propelled by a desire to portray emotion first, to the exclusion of precision and order.

[61] *Figaro,* 20 February 1909.

World War I effectively ended the Vorticist movement, but its supporters, who included Ezra Pound, Thomas Ernest Hulme, John Milo Ford and Jacob Epstein, retained the basic philosophical premise that society, by which it might be assumed they meant an intellectual elite within it, must be protected from sentiment and tradition. 'Imagism' amongst poets and writers was a revolt against the Romantics of the previous century. As with most of the Modernist movements it sought, at its most basic, to destroy and replace. Rhyme, metre, story and symbolic intent were replaced by a hard precision governing short poems of short lines and musical cadence.

Modernism in all its forms, with or without its varying classifications and appellations, was concerned with breaking away from established rules, traditions and conventions. Gerald Graff, in an attempt to sum up the times said

> As modern science and commerce identified themselves with the procedures of clear distinct thought and practical efficiency, it seemed natural for poets and literary critics to claim a special affinity with the more shadowy, undefined and elusive regions of consciousness that commerce and science tended to ignore or undervalue.[62]

It has been shown that not all poetry and literature sought to distance itself from the technology and commerce of the new times. Many writers, poets, painters, sculptors and composers of the Modernist times derived some inspiration from technology, whether or not they considered it malign or benign. It will be seen in later chapters that whilst the mass market and cultures were enjoying the new freedoms of wireless, talking-pictures, mass-circulation newspapers, magazines and mass transportation, many commentators from intellectual elites and the academies denied that these were freedoms at all. It is against this background that Shakespeare now has to be placed.

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[62] Gerald Graff, 'Determinacy/Indeterminacy', in *Critical Terms for Literary Study,* ed.by Frank Lettricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 163-175, p. 164.

Subsequent chapters will examine the various ways in which certain critics, or groups of critics and academics coped with the subject in the context of an entirely new set of circumstances, but it is appropriate here to summarise the questions which these groups, and this thesis, address:

1. Given the new environment, can Shakespeare exist in forms which suit both the intellectually and academically gifted *and* the mass consumer?
2. If Shakespeare is made to appeal to all sectors of society, can minority cultures adopt the subject as 'their own'?
3. How relevant can Shakespeare be in the light of new demographics, new technologies and emerging cultural movements?
4. Does it matter whether or not Shakespeare is relevant or current, given the cultural authority already achieved?
5. Was there to be a 'Shakespeare revolution', or could Shakespeare be made to adapt to new philosophies and disciplines and remain symbolically established?

These questions will be addressed from differing perspectives in subsequent chapters, not on the basis that the writer is hedging, but on the basis that if the questions are seen as a set of theses, then there are antithetical arguments in every case to be considered. The questions will be revisited at the conclusion of this thesis, to determine the degree to which they have been addressed.

Shakespeare and the New Society

On the face of it, the subject of Shakespeare does not lend itself to political relevance other than by considerable leaps of imagination. Shakespeare did not, as Spender quoted at the beginning of this chapter, '*anticipate* the madness of the

twentieth century', even after exhausting all of the meanings of the word in the Oxford English Dictionary. Commentators would ascribe various kinds of political relevance to whatever suited their theses, but only via the most tenuous of connections. As L.C. Knights points out:

> The word 'politics' does not even occur in Shakespeare. And the word 'politic' which does, connotes a base concern with appearances for the sake of political gain.[63]

To the Modernist thinker, Shakespeare's politics, even if they were able to be determined, would be an irrelevance, as would the equally undetermined attributes such as whether he was homosexual or not, royalist or republican, Christian or atheist, misogynist or feminist. To a Modernist, Shakespeare is a writer of fiction, not a social commentator; it is his words which concerned them, not his invented biography or any fanciful attributes which at best could only be guesswork based upon enthusiasm, bias or fancy. Provided therefore, that Shakespeare is considered *only* as a man of letters, he fits into the cultural *milieu* of the 1920s with ease. On the other hand there is the question of who is the real custodian of the Shakespeare name and reputation, given the conflicting values which were placed upon it by the opposing groups: either stage versus the page, old versus new, progressive or traditional. Into the cultural mix came a new factor of the élites in contention with the masses and the mass markets, and the ensuing inevitability of an argument which on one hand sought to maintain an exclusive custody of Shakespeare within prescribed circles, and on the other, sought to bring Shakespeare to as wide an audience as possible. This, during the period under discussion was to be a pivotal issue which was to be addressed by government, the

[63] L.C. Knights, *Further Explorations* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1946), pp. 12-13.

educational establishment, commercial interests, and by literary and intellectual factions.

The cultural environment throughout the inter-war period was not a fixed and fluent entity but one in which the various factions claimed or reclaimed parts of it, especially regarding Shakespeare. Whilst the next chapter examines this, it is appropriate to comment upon the words of Muriel Bradbrook, who sets the scene for the academic and intellectual contests which lay ahead:

> His [Shakespeare's] only art was that of dramatic speech; his thoughts and beliefs are known only through his art; he left no equivalent of Milton's *De Doctrina* or Boswell's private papers….These scholars [of the period] were still ruled by classical theory, especially in prosody; their interest in words was etymological first and foremost…During the 1930s Shakespeare the playwright was sunk in Shakespeare the poet.[64]

Whilst Bradbrook is making a case against the appropriation of Shakespeare by the academics, the critics and the scholars, she appears to be helping to make their case with some of her assumptions. Shakespeare's 'thoughts and beliefs', as already discussed, *cannot* be known only 'through his art', which, the Modernist scholars might say must stand the test of examination solely upon its own merits. Bradbrook says that the scholars were '*still* ruled by classical theory', as though no change had taken place in the cultural environment, whereas modern thinking had caused the scholars to rethink their approach to literature and poetry as one of analysis, deconstruction and close examination, rather than one of guesswork. Lastly, Bradbrook's claim that 'dramatic speech' was Shakespeare's 'only art' appears to include the *Sonnets*, *The Rape of Lucerne, Venus and Adonis* and the other poems, for

[64] M.C. Bradbrook, 'Fifty Years of Criticism of Shakespeare's Style: A Retrospect', *Shakespeare Survey* 7 (1954), pp.1-11, pp. 1,2,3,9.

it would be impossible for a scholar of Bradbrook's standing to have forgotten them, unless her argument was being artificially crafted to suit her thesis.

The five questions raised on page forty-five suggest a background against which the Shakespeare industry had never previously operated. Whether there prevailed a traditional approach to Shakespeare, or one which was urgent and progressive, reflected to some extent the same options which were discovered in the country at large in society, politics and culture. The question of whether Shakespeare could even possibly be a part of the new era in the light of new thinking and new markets could also be seen in parallel with the acceptance or otherwise of new versus old art forms, of architecture, or even clothing and furnishing.

The following chapters address the question of whether or not in the inter-war years, a 'distrust of tradition' generated a benign or malign influence upon the country; but again it is important to know what is meant in this context by 'the country'. It is generally unsatisfactory to write of 'the country' when there were so many anomalies in the disposition of the population, the relative wealth or poverty levels and the varying trends from region to region. From around 1925, for example, the misfortune of the miners, caught in an industry in decline, causing much unemployment, was countered in the midlands and the south by the burgeoning new industries of car production, white goods manufacture and house-building. Slums remained in the major cities, but there was also a massive building expansion of homes in the newly-created suburbs of the midlands and the south-east.

These changes taking place in society, supplemented by such other new developments as the enfranchisement of women, the entry of women into Oxford and Cambridge, the rise of the 'City Universities' and the creation of a turning-point in general education, produced a complex background against which the works of a poet

and dramatist who wrote 300 years before, were analysed, assessed and, as this thesis suggests, reformed and revised in order to survive.

There is no way in which this thesis can define the 'mood of the nation', national sentiments or the national view of any single component of the structure of society in the period. There are writers who have ventured into this area, noted or quoted at various points in this thesis, who risk the charge of easy generalization. There was no national consensus on any aspect of the strategies of the government until 1940, when the exigencies of war and Britain's isolation called for unity of purpose. The effect of this was to submerge many of the social problems which had developed in the preceding twenty years.

Other Influences

So far, the cultural influences discussed have been weighted largely towards the minority groupings of scholars and intellectuals. Much has been made above however, about the rise of the middle-classes with their proportionate influences upon time and disposable income, which provoked either the revision of existing industries or the invention of new ones. As the period progressed, the ever-more literate public was accommodated by an expanding publishing industry, both in terms of the novel and the newspaper, where the expansion and diversity of both, attracted audiences of similar attributes.

If in the period the study of Shakespeare was in danger of becoming rooted merely in history, character and biography, a notion aired more comprehensively in chapter two, then the books of the 1920s and 1930s would have provided the people of the new markets with an opportunity to break with tradition and to examine the contemporary world rather than the old one. If the reader required a degree of

escapism, it was provided by such novels as Somerset Maugham's *The Moon and Sixpence,* of 1919, in which a middle-class stockbroker leaves his family to seek a new life as a painter in Paris, or by *The Constant Nymph*, a prototype 'Bohemian' novel of sexuality and noble savagery in the Tyrol, by Margaret Kennedy in 1924.

Most of the new works however, were concerned with current themes which, if not instantly recognizable to the reader, might provide him or her with an insight into another social dimension. David Herbert Lawrence's *Women in Love*, written in 1921, would have fulfilled this role adequately, with its stresses on society and politics in a late Edwardian Midlands town. Later in the period, in 1933, Walter Greenwood's *Love on the Dole* would provide a retrospective of the General Strike and the effects of unemployment, using the town of Salford not only to represent the poverty-stricken areas of the north, but also to highlight the contrasts within the class structure.

Those who sought to fit Shakespeare into a modern context would have found the task increasingly difficult, as contemporary writers dealt with current issues convincingly. Examples here were works such as George Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier* of 1937, on the bleak living conditions in the north, or the earlier *Angel Pavement* by John Boynton Priestley in 1931, which portrayed the new commercialism as a mean and deceitful world of opportunists who profited from new import markets, particularly in cotton goods. Such imports were threatening the north of England with mass unemployment at the time.

It was not only the realities of working-class predicaments which exercised the novelists of the period; Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall* of 1928 satirised the *mores* and the values of society at large, whilst Edward Morgan Forster's *A Passage to India* of 1924 questioned the complacency of colonialism by highlighting the cultural

differences and the differing aims of the British versus the colonized, using India, popularly the 'jewel in the crown' as a warning of future problems. This was a particularly well-timed work, given that the Empire was regularly cited at the time as a rallying point for a recovering nation with a large measure of distrust of all that tradition had produced. Thomas Edward Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* in 1922 (but not published in full until 1926) had attacked what in his view was the calamitous injustice of the British government and military establishment towards the Arabs. No matter how vociferous on the foresight and wisdom of Shakespeare were the likes of Spender or Charlton, as mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the fact remained that society was undergoing fundamental changes which would prove to be irreversible and which dealt with concepts unconsidered in Shakespeare's day. In perhaps typically mischievous style, George Bernard Shaw shows one aspect of this with his *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism,* which he wrote in 1928 as an advertisement for his particular take on Socialism and Marxism, using the title to cause as much affront as possible to the male-dominated establishments of Government and Parliament.

At first examination, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* of 1932 suggests that Shakespeare, who is quoted throughout the book, as well as in its title, is somehow reinstated as a cultural symbol. The works of Shakespeare are, however, banned by the regime of the London of 2540AD, and references to the texts are made to demonstrate the primitive nature of those who use them. The book is actually, amongst other things, a condemnation of contemporary mass production and mass markets resulting in a compliant and mediocre society. Herbert George Wells, in *The Shape of Things to Come,* the year after *Brave New World,* is a dystopian view of another world war, the collapse of capitalism, and a world populated by polymaths.

Whilst, as I argue elsewhere, the modern literary critics tended to eschew the traditions of Bradley, Raleigh *et al,* they were likely to have recognised and responded positively to the new works of the period which, both in format and content, reflected new approaches to the novel. *Night and Day*, by Virginia Woolf was published in 1919, *Mrs. Dalloway* in 1925 and *To the Lighthouse* in 1927. In much of her writing is evident a 'stream of consciousness' style, where the unspoken thoughts of characters are presented without logical sequence or syntax, as also demonstrated in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, written in 1922, but banned in Britain until 1936.

These few examples are intended to show the wide scope of the literature of the period, which would involve readers from all backgrounds and of varying intellects. The Education Acts of Parliament around the turn of the century, discussed in more detail in chapter three, resulted in unprecedented levels of literacy and thereby a large new market for the publishers to address. Perhaps the most notable acknowledgement of this market was the founding of Penguin Books by Allen Lane in 1935, offering paperback books at one shilling (5p) which were previously on sale at perhaps fifteen shillings (75p) in hardback, a palpable demonstration of a changing culture. The formal and informal study of Shakespeare was also transformed by the introduction of the Penguin Shakespeare series when the first editions began to become available.

The Press

A further demonstration can be noted in the growth of the newspaper and magazine industry where, from 1921 to 1939 there was a 110% increase in the circulation of the eight main weekday newspapers.[65] The main increases are most

[65] All circulation figures are taken from the Audit Bureau of Circulations, hhtp://www.accessabc.com

notable in the 'popular' sector, although the 'quality' sector also showed substantial gains. The most popular newspaper of the period was the *Daily Express*, with a circulation which rose from 579,000 in 1921 to 2.5 million in 1939. This newspaper, which was founded in 1900 was marketed with the middle-classes as its primary audience whilst the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Herald* were aimed at the working-classes, and achieved a joint circulation of 2.4 million by 1939. By 1935, Sunday newspapers had become fully established in middle and working class cultures to a point where the combined circulations of the *News of the World*, the *Sunday Mirror* and *The People* reached 8.5 million which, by using the newspaper industry's readership yardstick of three readers per copy, would mean that twenty five million people, well over half the population, would read them.

The political stances of newspapers became more defined after the war. The *Daily Mirror*, with its slogan 'Forward with the People', left no doubts of its political bias, nor especially did the *Daily Worker* which was founded in 1930 as a crusading paper on behalf of the Communist Party. The *Daily Telegraph* and *The Times*, founded in 1855 and 1785 respectively, continued broadly to represent the monarchy and the political, military and financial establishments. The circulation figures for these newspapers reflect the same levels of success as the middle and working-class newspapers, the *Telegraph* rising from 180,000 copies in 1921 to 737,000 in 1939. So it was that the political-cultural boundaries were shaped during the period, helped by a press which reflected, or at least aimed to reflect, the views of those whom they claimed to represent.

A representative example of the changing popular culture of the age is demonstrated by the *Radio Times*. This magazine was not founded until September

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The eight newspapers comprise: *Daily Express, Daily Mirror, Daily Herald, Daily Mail, News Chronicle, Daily Telegraph, Daily Sketch, The Times.*

1923, but its reported circulation for 1939 is given as 2,981,986. It was priced at two-pence (less than 1p) throughout the period, its circulation helped by the fact that the national newspapers refused to carry BBC programme details for fear, as their owners saw it, of supporting a competing medium. The success of the *Radio Times* reflects that of radio generally, and provides evidence of how the disposition of time and income, for a substantial population of the country had altered from one decade to the next.

Summary

The over-riding social phenomenon of the period, emphasized above, and which exercised literary critics, the educational establishment and the production of Shakespeare in performance in all its forms, was the rise of the middle-classes. The following three chapters will examine separately the effect of this rise upon all three components and will determine the extent to which its influence was either malign or benign, according to the commentators of the day. Factors which also influenced the three sectors of the direction of literary criticism, education and performance were those of politics and the economy, factors which probably have always ordered the intellectual, commercial and artistic direction of modern western countries. Industrial and economic decline, often cited as a characteristic of the inter-war years in Britain, is shown as a myth which has been perpetrated by writers with a specific political agendum, or those with the advantage of hindsight who 'saw' the calamitous ending of the period. Patrick O'Brien presents an antithesis when he writes that

> …rates of growth and productivity change experienced by the British economy in 1921-1938 were satisfactory in terms of historical trends, and a definite improvement, compared with the long cycle of 1899-1913. Furthermore, British industry adapted reasonably well to shifts in consumer demand… [and] the continued, even accelerated, advance of new industries…helped to

> regenerate the economy and strongly assisted its recovery from the Great Depression over the years 1932-38.[66]

These views correspond with those of Stevenson and Cook, already referenced, when they referred to the 'popular mythology of the thirties' in *Britain in the Depression.*

O' Brien, Cook and Stevenson do not concern themselves with Shakespeare, culture, theatre or the rise of state-controlled education. What they do however, along with Sydney Pollard and others, is identify an environment in which the arts and the sciences have, in large and specifically defined sectors of the population, a stable platform upon which to develop, where mere survival is no longer an issue for a growing majority, a fortunate sector which became better educated and possessed more disposable time and income as the period progressed.

In the introductory chapter the notion was introduced of those factors of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats surrounding the stature or the promotion of Shakespeare in all forms. The thesis, up to this point, has identified that the four conditions existed, giving rise to the five questions posed on page forty-five which are addressed in the following chapters against the background described in this one.

[66] Patrick O' Brien, 'Britain's Economy between the Wars: A Survey of a Counter Revolution in Economic History', *Past and Present* 115 (1989), 107-130, p. 107.

Chapter Two

Visions and Revisions: The Critical Perspective

This chapter will examine the criticism of Shakespeare between the two world wars in the context of the social, political, cultural and technological changes which prevailed throughout the period. It argues that the intensifying disillusion with, and distrust of traditional practices in literary and academic matters, redirected the course of criticism, and challenged old attitudes and methods applied to the study of Shakespeare. The chapter will also show that attitudes to Shakespeare reflected in specific areas, the innovations, changes and shifting opinions and manners which were discussed in the last chapter. Just as old standards and régimes were questioned, or had fallen, and as societies were reformed or divided, so the subject of Shakespeare became one of revision, conflict, instability and deeper research which questioned the conventions and norms of the past. Although such norms and conventions were challenged in the period leading up to the war, there appeared afterwards to be a growing consensus of challenge in areas of authorship, textual integrity and historical, biographical and character criticism. This in turn challenged the deferential status which had been accorded to Shakespeare over many centuries. The chapter proposes Shakespeare as a paradigm for the times, reflecting a society and culture which was experiencing unprecedented changes against a background of instability, dissent and uncertainty.

As in the last chapter, the *post hoc* argument is avoided, acknowledging that it would be wrong to ascribe the social, cultural and political situation which obtained in the early 1920s, entirely to the war. The previous chapter showed that other artistic movements which flourished after the war actually originated before it, sometimes in

the mid nineteenth century. So, it will be seen, did the new approaches to the study and criticism of Shakespeare. The first area of concentration is the notion of Shakespeare as a fixed and permanent exemplar of the best of England and its cultural primacy. The bardolatry of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian times was consistent: from Samuel Coleridge's lectures in 1811 and 1812, through Thomas Carlyle's *The Hero as Poet* and to Walter Raleigh's address at the Annual Shakespeare Lecture at the British Academy on 4 July 1918. Here Raleigh said, 'there is nothing new and important to be said of Shakespeare', and went on to say:

> I propose to return to the old catholic doctrine which has been illuminated by so many disciples of Shakespeare, and to speak of him as our great national poet…He embodies all the virtues, and most of the faults of England.[1]

Raleigh is implying here that whilst there may be new things to say about Shakespeare, they could not be important, or that all of the important things could not be new. This quotation is an example of the respect and deference which some scholars thought proper in their treatment of Shakespeare as a fixed representation of all things English. Consideration should be given to the fact that Raleigh was speaking at a point in the war when it could not be known that it had only four more months to run. The propaganda value of Raleigh's paper may have been a reason for such extravagant terminology.

Reservations about Shakespeare's status as national emblem, and on the quality of his works, had been voiced by writers of previous generations. William Hazlitt had said, in 1817 that, 'Our idolatry of Shakespeare (not to say our admiration) ceases with his plays'.[2] Hazlitt's stress on the primacy of reading Shakespeare's

[1] Sir W.A. Raleigh, *Shakespeare and England* (London: H. Milford, 1918), p. 3.
[2] William Hazlitt, *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (London: J.M. Dent, 1906, repr.), p. 263.

works, rather than hearing them in performance, was repeated in the post-war years and provoked a divergence in the assessment of their quality, something which hitherto had not been experienced. Leo Tolstoy is another example of an irritant to the largely serene and unchallenging era of the bardolators. In *Tolstoy on Shakespeare*, published in English in London, he reports his 'repulsion and tedium' on reading Shakespeare, and goes on to say,

> Although I know that the majority of people so firmly believe in the greatness of Shakespeare that in reading this judgment of mine they will not admit even the possibility of its justice and will not give the slightest attention, nevertheless I will endeavour, as well as I can, to show why I believe that Shakespeare can not be recognized either as a great genius, or even as an average author.[3]

Although it seems that Tolstoy was sincere in this dismissive passage, it could be inferred that he was striking an attitude which fitted his new-found taste for iconoclasm. He eventually came to espouse a moral code based upon the love of human kind which, amongst other things, opposed the ownership of property and repudiated organized religion. The latter of these had caused his excommunication from the Russian Orthodox church. He had become an enemy of the traditional and the bourgeois, a position which fitted an anti-bardolatrist stance. This analysis presumes that his recognition of Shakespeare also included a notion that Shakespeare represented the fixed, the safe, the traditional and the bourgeois, and that thereby, Tolstoy was perhaps less inclined to a balanced and objective assessment.

George Bernard Shaw added to the mischief by defending Tolstoy's supposed 'heresy' in a letter to V. Tchertkoff thus:

> I have striven hard to open English eyes to the emptiness of Shakespeare's philosophy, to the superficiality and second-handness of his morality, to his weakness and incoherence as a thinker, to his snobbery, his vulgar prejudices

[3] Leo Tolstoy, *Tolstoy on Shakespeare* (New York and London: Funk and Wagnall's, 1906), p. 4.

> the disqualification of all sorts for the philosophic eminence claimed for him. …May I suggest that you should be careful not to imply that Tolstoy's great Shakespearean heresy has no other support than mine.[4]

Shaw, at the age of fifty and still enjoying his reputation as *enfant terrible* of dramatic and literary criticism, was perhaps not quite as *terrible* as this passage suggests, but he was after all a well-known writer, dramatist and music critic, whose words and deeds often commanded attention, a fact of which he would have been aware. His care in using the word 'English' could, of course, be taken as simply the usage of the times to mean British, but, as an Irishman known frequently to harangue or make fun of the English, it might be that that this was merely another opportunity for him to do so. Shakespeare, unarguably an Englishman, and by the time Shaw wrote the above, the personification of Englishness, presented a perfect target for his lugubrious style of bourgeois-baiting, targeting an Englishman *and* an English institution simultaneously.

A.C. Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy* of 1904 was more respectful of Shakespeare than Tolstoy or Shaw, but was not without adverse criticism upon faults, as he perceived them, of anachronisms, soliloquies delivered directly to an audience, and the excessive use of metaphor. Two-thirds of Bradley's book however, is devoted to the study of character, an area about which Bradley could be seen as fanciful. His reputation as a scholarly and respected writer came under pressure thirty years later, when his musings upon such fancies as for example what Cordelia would have done in Desdemona's place, produced lively and mischievous reactions, notably from L.C. Knight's in his essay, *How Many Children Had Lady Macbeth?,* in 1930. Bradley might have set the tone for Shakespeare criticism for the earlier years of the century by presenting either a template for scholars and students, or a symbol of

[4] G.B. Shaw, 'Mr. G.B. Shaw on Shakespeare', in *Tolstoy on Shakespeare* (London: The Free Age Press, Undated), pp. 114-116.

tradition for the same to oppose. As Kenneth Muir put it, 'many critics were influenced by Bradley in one way or another, not least when they have reacted against his methods'.[5] Later reactions to *Shakespearean Tragedy* exemplify the course of thesis, antithesis and, occasionally, synthesis which was to characterize and enliven criticism in the period.

The status of Shakespeare continued to be questioned throughout the post-war era, particularly regarding his personification of Englishness. Wyndham Lewis continued this examination as late as 1936 when he suggested that:

> …there is a disquieting statement so often made that Shakespeare is *universal. Universal* bears an uncomfortable affinity to *international*. How can you be a typical Englishman and at the same time be 'universal'?[6]

Wyndham Lewis had a point. Shakespeare's international status had been celebrated in 1914 when the *New York Times* reported on the announcement that King George V and the Emperor Franz Josef of Austria had accepted membership of the German Shakespeare Society, Kaiser Wilhelm having 'long been a member'.[7] The Society had existed since 1874, three years after the foundation of the new German state, and had helped to create a situation in that newly established country where Shakespeare was awarded the partial status of national poet and dramatist. At a celebration in Weimar to mark Shakespeare's birthday, Professor Brandl was reported to be proud of the fact that more than one hundred continental theatres in which German is spoken, 'from Riga to the French frontier', produced plays in Shakespeare's honour.[8] There is perhaps some irony in the concept of two nations which were at war three months after the report in the *New York Times,* both claiming Shakespeare as their own.

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[5] Kenneth Muir, 'Fifty Years of Shakespearean Criticism', *Shakespeare Survey* 2 (1951), 1-25, p. 4.
[6] Wyndham Lewis, *The Lion and the Fox* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1936), p. 17.
[7] *New York Times,* 26 April 1914, p. 1.
[8] *Ibid.*

Britain had not ignored the promotion of Shakespeare; the New Shakespere Society, for example, had been inaugurated on March 13 1874, by F.J. Furnivall. The Society claimed to act on behalf of Shakespeare in a way that the Academie Française acted on behalf of the French language, as promoter and guardian. The Society was in fact more than a sentinel or a centre of worship. It had been founded with the aim of encouraging the widest study of Shakespeare in every English-speaking country and also encouraging new and more scientific approaches based upon close study of the texts, these being seen as the only 'facts' available to a researcher. The prospectus of the Society puts it thus:

> To do honour to SHAKSPERE, to make out the succession of his plays and thereby the growth of his mind and art, to promote the intelligent study of him, and to print Texts illustrating his works and his times, this *New Shakspere Society* is founded.[9]

At the first meeting of the society on Friday 13 March 1874, Frederick G. Fleay gave the first paper, which was a study of versification and its relationship to questions of the authorship and chronology of Shakespeare's plays.

The society admitted women on equal terms with men, a move which caused some later critics, who possibly embraced the misogynist assumption that women's interest in the subject was sectional rather than objective and thereby of little importance, to dismiss the organization as an aberration. Furnivall, true to his cause, made sure that many of the early papers at Society meetings were given by women. It was paradoxical that the dismissive attitude towards the New Shakespere Society, exemplified by Algernon Charles Swinburne in particular, produced a positive reaction later when a more scientific study of Shakespeare was considered appropriate. Swinburne compared the Society to the nineteenth-century "Society for the Diffusion

[9] F.J. Furnivall, *The New Shakespeare Society* (Founder Prospectus, revised 1873), p. 6.

of Useful Knowledge' by parodying it as the 'Polypseudocriticopantodapamorophisticometricoglossematographicomaniacal Company for the Diffusion of Verbiage Unlimited'. Perhaps Swinburne was missing the point: the status of Shakespeare appears to have been seen by the Society as a progressive and shifting entity rather than on what was immovable and constant. The Society's notion of Shakespeare's cultural eminence was underwritten by a perceived need to modify and change; a philosophical approach which was to have considerable resonance in the inter-war years. Notwithstanding the many positions taken on Shakespeare, the dominant strain within the community of writers and critics up to the end of the war remained one of acceptance and respect, exemplified by Raleigh's comments above.

The status of Shakespeare however, continued to exercise the post-war critics and commentators. His status, as Dover Wilson saw it, was actually an obstacle to the wider appreciation of his plays. Wilson referred to Stratford upon Avon as 'the headquarters of Shakespeare the institution', and said that the town was 'full of peep-shows and relics [of Shakespeare] and middle-class superstitions'.[10] Wilson's popularity within the literary establishment was probably not enhanced when he said that:

> The enormous amount of scholarship and commentary which has accumulated round the name of Shakespeare during the last 250 years, gives people the notion that he is too difficult, too profound for the average mortal to understand.[11]

Whilst there may have been some anecdotal evidence which Dover Wilson used to support this, perhaps he should have acknowledged here, as he does later as an editor, that the understanding and interpretation of Shakespeare's texts really is not a simple

[10] J. Dover Wilson, *Six Tragedies of Shakespeare* (London: Longmans Green and Company), p. 4-5.
[11] *Ibid.* p. 6.

matter to the average mortal, who might never find them anything other than too difficult and profound.

Dover Wilson nevertheless identified what was to become a crisis in the perception of the status of Shakespeare. The subtext of his argument asks the questions: for whom is Shakespeare intended? Is the status of Shakespeare a notion of different focus for different groups, depending upon educational background and/or intellectual acuity? Even a twenty-first century view might provide a compromise answer; at the time it was a matter which had not previously been considered relevant, but became so as more distractions were available to divert the population from what had become traditional, and towards a new mass culture. At least Wilson led by example as he, with Arthur Quiller-Couch as co-editor until 1925, edited the 'New Cambridge Shakespeare' from 1921 to 1966. It was published by the Cambridge University Press in thirty-nine volumes, the introduction to each characterised by a simplicity and clarity of style in an attempt to de-mystify the texts. This is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Gary Taylor, musing upon the status of Shakespeare, says that 'According to my measurements, Shakespeare's reputation peaked in the reign of Queen Victoria, and is now [1999] shrinking'.[12] Taylor does not identify his system of measurement of Shakespeare's reputation, which is in any case impossible to quantify and difficult to qualify. What Taylor did note in his essay was the increased interest in revivals of *Volpone* and *Bartholomew Fair* on the London stage in 1921 after an absence of 136 and 190 years respectively. He said, 'For the first time in almost two centuries, Shakespeare had company on the Everest of English drama'.[13] The word 'company' can be taken for 'competition', but that was then in some abundance on the stage in

[12] Gary Taylor, 'The Incredible Shrinking Bard', in *Shakespeare and Appropriation* ed. by Christy Desmet and Robert Sawyer (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 197-205 (p. 197).
[13] Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare* (London: Vintage, 1991), p. 231.

the 1920s and 1930s, but mainly from new, rather than other traditional or classical dramatists.

It is difficult to argue that Shakespeare's status did not depend mainly upon a traditional perception of him and his works as a symbolic representation of England and its culture. In the same way, a traditional view of England itself, encouraged in the propaganda of the Great War, was that of a great nation with a great empire, a benevolent influence upon the world and a military and economic power which operated in the best interests of the world, backed by unprecedented economical and military and naval power. The foregoing chapter however, points to a diminution in all of these areas and a considerable lessening of England's, i.e. Britain's status. So it was with Shakespeare, where parallels can be found to show that as the country's fortunes waned under the close examination of an ever more interrogative population, so did those of Shakespeare. An example of this is the examination of the authorship and the textual integrity of Shakespeare's plays.

Disintegration

Questions concerning authorship and collaborative writing were not new. The bardolatry of the Victorian period, whilst being entrenched to some extent, was disturbed and interrupted from time to time, especially later in the period when tradition began to be suspected as a foundation or excuse for inaction, lazy research, or complacency. A measure of disturbance came from the work of F.G. Fleay, a graduate of King's College, London and Trinity College, Cambridge, who was ordained in the Church of England and who eventually, as mentioned, became an active figure in the foundation of the New Shakespere Society in 1874. Fleay, a mathematician, applied his skills to the research of Shakespeare's plays. In

Shakespeare Manual of 1876, he concluded, *inter alia*, that *Titus Andronicus* was written by Marlowe, that Peele and Marlowe wrote the three parts of *Henry VI*, with only 'isolated scenes' by Shakespeare.[14] Fleay was certain that *Romeo and Juliet* was written by Peele in 1593, later corrected by Shakespeare in 1596. On *Richard III* he wrote:

> I have no doubt that it was written by G. Peele, left unfinished by him, completed and partly corrected by Shakespeare as we have it in the Quartos, and that afterwards altered it into the shape in which it was printed into the Folio.[15]

In the debates, and amid the acrimony of the 1920s, E.K. Chambers, a defender of the First Folio, spoke of Fleay that 'he had a demon of inaccuracy, which was unfortunate, as he relied largely upon statistics', and dismisses him for 'advancing destructive notions without an adequate support of argument'.[16] Chambers appears to have ignored those critics who had advanced supportive notions without similar adequate support. Fleay eventually gave up the study of English Literature and of Shakespeare, in later years devoting himself to Egyptology and Assyriology, but his early work contributed to the debates of the 1920s. Chambers' comments on Fleay's work suggest that the former saw a new heresy which required drastic and forceful counter argument.

There were three factions, of varying levels of intensity, participating in the authorship issue. The first, exemplified by Chambers, might be called the 'Foliolatrists', to borrow from J. M. Robertson's chapter title 'On Shakespearean Foliolatry'; those to whom the editorship of Heminges and Condell was regarded as

[14] F.G. Fleay, *Shakespeare Manual* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1876), pp. 58-9.
[15] *Ibid.* p. 31.
[16] E.K. Chambers, 'The Disintegration of Shakespeare', in *Aspects of Shakespeare*, ed. by Lascelles Abercrombie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 23-48, p. 28.

exemplary.[17] Chambers held that, in the broadest terms, too much analysis and inaccurate inferences drawn from it would harm the study and the appreciation of Shakespeare. The second faction, best demonstrated by Robertson himself, who had written *Did Shakespeare Write Titus Andronicus?* in 1905, believed that analysis or deconstruction did not bring about disintegration, and that discussions on authorship and collaboration were part of a natural evolutionary process in the study of Shakespeare. A third group concerned themselves with Shakespeare's plays purely as artefacts, and was unconcerned with academic squabbles on what it considered the irrelevancies of authorship. This third faction comprised the writers of the new, modern *genre* and was represented by a coterie of writers amongst whom were numbered T.S. Eliot, William Empson, L.C. Knights *et al.*

E.K. Chambers may fairly be described as a 'fundamentalist Shakespearean' who eschewed the post-war rush to Modernism, with all its implications and complications of analysis and interrogation. In his lecture to the British Academy in 1924, 'The Disintegration of Shakespeare', Chambers attacked revisionism, choosing the now deceased Fleay as his primary target, but using him to bring Robertson into the argument. Of him, Chambers said, 'The mantle of Mr. Fleay has descended upon Mr. J.M. Robertson, who disposes its flying skirts into the decent folds of a logical system.'[18]

Chambers' campaign was wide-ranging and even-handed. Fleay had died in 1909, and Robertson was over seventy years of age in 1924 at the time of Chambers' paper, so he included younger targets for his scorn:

> I turn to the parallel speculations started by Professor Pollard and pursued by Mr. Dover Wilson in his new edition of the plays [criticizing Wilson's

[17] J.M. Robertson, *The State of Shakespeare Study* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1931) p. 5.
[18] E.K. Chambers, 'The Disintegration of Shakespeare', in *Aspects of Shakespeare* ed. by J.W. McKail (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1933), 23-48. p. 28.

> editorship]. It has now covered seven of the comedies and not one of them is allowed to be an integral and untouched product of Shakespeare's creative energy.[19]

Chambers saw Edmond Malone's *Attempt to ascertain the Order in which the Plays of Shakespeare were written,* of 1778, as exemplary and final, and his editorship of the sixteen volumes of the plays in 1790 as a model for future editors to follow, and from which not to diverge too fancifully.

The assessment of Chambers' influences upon the criticism of the period has varied. Grace Ioppollo, for example, said that:

> E.K. Chambers's reverberating condemnation in 1924 of any exploration of authorial revision (on the grounds that it would 'disintegrate' the Shakespearean canon by revealing non-Shakespeare material underlying some of the plays) effectively silenced modern discussion of revision.[20]

This however, is surely not the case. It will be shown that critics were fascinated by the researches of the New Shakespere Society and that the work of scholars such as J.M. Robertson. Chambers had merely seized upon one particular aspect of Shakespeare study and had sought to create a *cause célèbre* where he stood as the central figure. This observation is not intended pejoratively, for literature and criticism may need these creative frictions to promote and extend their reason for existence. Chambers also, as first President of the Malone Society, from 1906 to 1939, had a motive for protecting Malone's reputation. He was also part of the establishment of the day: he was appointed Companion of the Order of the Bath in 1912, and Knight Commander in 1925, the year in which he was also elected a Fellow of the British Academy. Perhaps an even greater influence upon him was his position on the new Board of Education where he was to rise to Second Secretary, a post

[19] *Ibid.* p. 40.
[20] Grace Ioppollo, *Revising Shakespeare* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 2.

which he left in 1926. In this role, his interest would most likely have been to provide for present and future secondary and tertiary students, a Shakespeare which was fixed and constant, free from dissent and from suspicions that Shakespeare did not write all of Shakespeare.

The revisionists did, however, ensure that questions of authorship and collaboration provided opportunities for study and debate. They were given some assistance from Thomas Looney who in an article headed 'Hunting the Bard' in the *Daily News* of 4 March 1920, had 'discovered' the Earl of Oxford.[21]. Looney's claim that the whole canon was in fact the work of the Earl was not, as far as can be ascertained, taken very seriously, although a year later, sixteen column inches in the *Morning Post* were allocated to the authorship question.[22] It might be inferred that the newly-public authorship debate, reactivated by Looney, provoked responses from literary critics. Although this remains a possibility, there is no evidence that they were impelled by any other forces than were brought about by those within the literary establishment.

As a prominent member of this establishment, J.M. Robertson wrote, under the sub-heading, 'The Scandals of Disintegration':

> My friend, Professor J. Dover Wilson, the accomplished editor of the New Cambridge Shakespeare, has had the measure meted to him in being classed as a 'disintegrator' (with his co-editor) by the Grand Mandarin of the moment, Sir E.K. Chambers, who, having done some hand-to-mouth disintegration in his day…has sought salvation in abjuring the revolutionary spirit, as well he might, having no fundamental affinities that way.[23]

[21] *Daily News,* 4 March 1920, p. 3.
[22] *Morning Post,* 20 May 1921, p. 5.
[23] J.M. Robertson, *The State of Shakespeare Study* (London: George Rutledge and Company, 1931), p. 16.

Robertson was ostensibly protecting his 'friend' J. Dover Wilson, who was from a generation after Robertson, whilst simultaneously keeping alive the running argument with Chambers. The last two lines of the quotation above, label Chambers as an old reactionary by the seventy-seven year old Robertson. Dover Wilson, not yet fifty, was an unsurprising target for Chambers and his followers. Wilson was seen sometimes a heretic who appeared intent upon dismantling all of the protective structures which had surrounded Shakespeare scholarship for generations. He placed little importance on the fundamentalism which declared Shakespeare's plays as all his own work, and further irritated those 'abjuring the revolutionary spirit' by saying such things as:

> For one thing, he [Shakespeare] never wrote to be read at all. He wrote to be acted, and so little did he think of his plays as books, that he did not even take the trouble to get them published.[24]

Wilson was referring only to the plays and not the *Sonnets* or the other poems. He also perhaps assumes too much regarding Shakespeare's view of his plays, and appears not to have thought of other reasons why the plays were not, as far as can be known, published by the writer. Wilson cannot know that Shakespeare 'never wrote to be read at all', or that 'so little did he think of his plays as books' or that he took no trouble 'to get them published'. For a scholar of Wilson's stature, the quotation above appears at first sight to be naïve and speculative, but it should be read in the context of the arguments then raging. He was adding controversy to an already controversial area in which he believed that the plays were being deliberately mystified by critics and academics who wished to see them elevated to a point beyond which 'the average mortal', as he had put it, cannot understand, to a point where highly specialized knowledge was a *sine qua non* of proper Shakespeare study and appreciation.

[24] J. Dover Wilson, *Six Tragedies of Shakespeare* (London: Longmans Green and Company, 1930), p. 2.

Wilson's credentials did not accord with the line taken by much of the literary establishment. He had edited a series of Shakespeare's plays under the General Editorship of R.S. Lambert, for the Worker's Education Authority, which he had entitled 'An Introduction for the Plain Man'. The books cost one shilling (5p) and presented the plays in outline, with Wilson's commentary written in a style more journalistic than academic. These books were expected to appeal and be comprehensible to anyone who could read a newspaper, an activity which became more common amongst all classes as the period progressed.

Although Looney's preoccupation with the Earl of Oxford might have given a lift to the authorship debate in popular circles, the impetus was most likely provided by the uncertainty and distrust which permeated some sectors of English society following the war. Questioning the authority of scholars and historians had, after all, been a feature of political revolutions of recent times, notably in Russia where such questioning of the foundations of a dynasty had led ultimately to its demise. The Irish Rebellion and the eventual partitioning of Ireland, whilst not directly attributable the war, was eventually brought about after the war because of a realization amongst the political hierarchy that merely because something had existed for centuries, there was no guarantee of its future based only upon its past.

Thus the questioning of the notion that Shakespeare wrote all, or perhaps any, of Shakespeare, was not unaligned with the times and the manners. A consistent theme of this thesis is the premise of a time entirely unprecedented in British history, in which novelty often prevailed over tradition and in which certainty was not a predominant notion. At a time when dynasties in Europe had been destroyed, and when governments were seen to be capable of misconstruction and negligence, it is

hardly surprising that an 'institution', as Wilson called it, such as Shakespeare, should be questioned and re-examined.

Interpretation and the Modern Way.

Questions of collaboration or authorship did not occupy the majority of scholars and critics. In spite of the tentative and nervous questioning of the integrity of Shakespeare's works, there existed a majority which concentrated upon the nature of criticism in a new era. As late in the period as 1934, T.S. Eliot said:

> Shakespeare criticism cannot be appreciated without some understanding of the time and the place in which it is written. The views of Shakespeare taken by different men at different times in different places form an integral part of the development and changes of European civilization during the last 300 years.[25]

Eliot's primary assertion here is questioned by some of the younger writers of the period such as William Empson and L.C. Knights, but for the purpose of the main argument it is reasonable to propose that times influence the writer rather than *vice versa.* The exceptions to this- Hitler, Mao Tse Tung or Lenin *et al*, do not have British equivalents. In Britain, influential writers such as Eliot, J.B. Priestley, G.B. Shaw, and F.R. Leavis exerted influence in a much restricted sphere, but they wrote with an understanding of time and place, which is Eliot's point in the extract above.

There are however, a number of points to be addressed which issue from Eliot's statement and also from the many ways in which Shakespeare criticism was attuned to the period. The first of these is exemplified by Lascelles Abercrombie's apparent exasperation in his lecture to the British Academy in 1930, where his main

[25] T.S. Eliot, 'Shakespearean Criticism: 1. From Dryden to Coleridge', in *A Companion to Shakespeare Studies,* ed. by Harley Granville Barker and G.B. Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934, repr. 1949), p. 289.

plea was that Shakespeare should be treated primarily as an artist, and that conjecture about his life, his intentions, his political or religious disposition was irrelevant. Some early remarks in his paper give clues to both his pessimism and his optimism:

> But perhaps the endlessness of Shakespeare criticism is like the endlessness of Einstein's space – you keep on going round and round…Nevertheless, I have sometimes thought I could detect signs that the process of Shakespearian criticism is once more on the turn: we may perhaps have come to the beginning of another revolution – which will land us once more where the Romantics stood[26]

If Romanticism is taken to mean the profound shift in sensibility which occurred in Britain between 1770 and 1848, inspired by the revolutions in France and America and as a reaction to the Enlightenment, then perhaps some parallels might be drawn. The revolt against classical form, conservative morality and human moderation which typified the Romantics might be reflected to some extent in the literary and intellectual manners of the inter-war years, but 'another revolution' was probably overstating the position. A problem which confronted those who sought to interpret Shakespeare's work as a series of artefacts was the number of what they saw as extraneous factors which were either irrelevant or obfuscatory. The Victorian era had seen a rise in biographical criticism in such works as Edward Dowden's *Shakspere: A Critical Study of his Mind and Art,* of 1875, Sidney Lee's *Life of William Shakespeare,* of 1898, and an essay by Bradley in 1904, *Shakespeare the Man.* Abercrombie, in his lecture said:

> You can never be sure what the intentions of an artist were, you always know what he actually did…It is surely time that we dropped all this knowing talk about 'Shakespeare the businessman', it has nothing whatsoever to do with anything that can conceivably concern criticism.[27]

[26] Lascelles Abercrombie, 'A Plea for the Liberty of Entertaining', in *Aspects of Shakespeare,* ed. by J.W. McKail (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 227-254 (p. 227).
[27] *Ibid.* pp, 230 & 233-4.

He went on to point out that both Michelangelo and Titian, through necessity, made businesses out of their art but were not thereby lessened as artists.

L.C. Knights, who in 1933 had made fun of his view of Bradley's pre-occupation with character criticism, was still twenty years later showing his suspicions of dubious history:

> One result of the accumulation of "background" studies…is to suggest that what was peculiar to an age, what can only now be recovered by thinking our way into past systems of thought, is what we most need to know if we are to enter fully into the imaginative achievements of that age.[28]

The use of quotation marks for the word 'background' illuminates Knights' dismissive attitude to the irrelevancies which in his opinion beset the proper study of Shakespeare. In his 1933 essay, Knights criticized not only Bradley, but referred all the way back to Maurice Morgann's 1777 *Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff,* via William Hazlitt's *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* of 1817, and Mary Cowden Clark's *The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines,* of 1851-2.

Knights and Abercrombie represented a growing faction of writers for whom there had been enough of the inventive and the fanciful, and insufficient of the forensic and the analytical. It was as though there was a movement which had decreed that the old styles such as biographical and character criticism had become moribund, and a new age of criticism born. Questions of authorship and collaboration which had seemed such important issues to Sir Edmund Chambers, were to be relegated or submerged by the newer critics who were as 'fundamentalist' on the plays and their

[28] L.C. Knights, *Shakespeare's Politics: With Some Reflections on the Nature of Tradition* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 115.

texts as Chambers was on their author, the First Folio, and the canon according to Malone.

There is a temptation to infer from the above that Shakespeare criticism fell into easily-recognised schools. However, although the underlying thesis of this chapter argues the fragmentation of the literary establishment, it will be seen that the components of Shakespeare criticism - textual, biographical, scientific - were not all isolated, and did overlap from time to time. G. Wilson Knight exemplifies this, particularly in *The Wheel of Fire* published in 1930. T.S. Eliot, an early agent of the style of criticism which was to become known as 'New Criticism', wrote the introduction. Knight could not be described as a prominent figure of 'New Criticism', but his relationship with those who were - Leavis, Empson, Knights - was one of mutual respect, if not agreement. In *The Wheel of Fire*, Knight, sometimes considered Bradley's nemesis, does in fact show great respect for him, saying that his aims were to see his work as 'the application to Shakespeare's work in general of the methods applied by Bradley to certain outstanding plays' and hopes that his 'own labours will be regarded as a natural development within the classic tradition of Shakespearean study.'[29]

Knight's approach to Shakespeare was pragmatic. He encouraged a multi-disciplined approach which considered character and symbolism, whilst also stressing the importance of chronology and an understanding of the Elizabethan audience and its expectations. Knight was not overly concerned with the notion of the 'problem play', such as *Measure for Measure*, which had exercised critics for centuries, but which he saw as Shakespeare's straightforward attempt to engage an audience with, to put it simply, a fallen Puritan, an innocent and saintly maiden, an audience-pleasing

[29] G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930), p. 7

'bed-trick', a rumbustious scene or two, and a fairly happy ending. Where, Knight might have asked, is the problem? The fact that Heminges and Condell had chosen, in the *Folio* of 1623, to allocate the plays into three classifications, presenting difficulties with such plays as *Measure for Measure,* appeared to be of little consequence to critics as the inter-war period progressed. Knight was occupied with plot and narrative, which some of his contemporaries saw as a distraction from the ambiguities and other complexities of the text as an artefact, the dominant concern of many of the modern critics.

Modernism and the New Criticism

In chapter one, reference was made to the notion that 'Modernism' is a rather unsatisfactory omnibus word which covers a number of movements in the arts and which was first mooted around the end of the nineteenth century. It is perhaps most simply described as the rejection and/or the questioning of past procedures and assumptions, and the adoption of adversarial stances towards them. It advocates a concentration on self-consciousness and a philosophy of continuous experimentation without regard to previous norms. Modernism was antipathetic to the academic and historicist traditions of the nineteenth century and the Victorian idea of progress and liberal optimism. Contained within this supposed definition can be seen most of the components listed previously which promoted the intellectual, political and social leanings of the early part of the period under review.[30]

'New Criticism' was not known as such until the American, John Crowe Ransom's book *The New Criticism,* first published in 1941, but the book dealt with new practices and tendencies in literature, and was a review and a synthesis of the

[30] Description of Modernism distilled from *The Concise Oxford Companion to English Literature,* ed. by Margaret Drabble and Jenny Stringer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 376.

works of many of the writers discussed in this chapter. Modernism and the new criticism moved quite naturally together throughout the period in that they both espoused and promoted entirely new attitudes within their respective fields. They reflected the nature of the times which were dominated by uncertainty, social and political change and, as particular anathema to the earnest Modernist, the exponential rise of mass consumerism. Modernism, given the vagueness and variety of its inferred meanings, possessed no single ideology with primacy over another, no putative dominant ideology as a fixed point. It therefore became a matter of different strands which took followers down differing paths which led sometimes to the emergence of élitist cliques and remote coteries of passionate intellectuals.

Shakespeare provided modern and Modernist critics and commentators with ideological problems. The first of these might be the question of whether or not he was relevant at all to the tenets of Modernism in that, as a 'national institution', as Dover Wilson put it, could Shakespeare be anything else but a hindrance to the new critics. When expressed in the view of W.H. Malcolm in *Shakespeare and Holy Writ:*

> It is but natural for an Englishman, whether he believes in the full inspiration of the Bible or not, to couple it, and Shakespeare's works together, for these books are the two which have most influenced the English mind.[31]

the question might arise as to how such claims may be challenged, or possibly ignored by the new critics. If the 'definition' of Modernism stands, it could be inferred that, not only does Shakespeare pose something of an obstacle to an absolute Modernist, but so does the Bible. In practice the writers of the times did not label themselves as 'Modernist' and were free to believe in anything they wished. Certainly there is no

[31] W.H. Malcolm, *Shakespeare and Holy Writ* (London: Marcus Ward and Company, 1881), p. 1.

evidence that atheism, either suddenly or gradually became a *sine qua non* for admittance to the modern literary establishment in the inter-war years.

There were other potential problems for the modern writers who sought to discover the texts and to eschew narrative, plot and presentation. There arose the question of Shakespeare's popularity with theatre audiences as well as his adoption as a national symbol. The application of modern criticism to the plays clearly conflicted with the traditional approaches, so questions would arise on the integrity or validity of both approaches. On the other hand, the most pragmatic strategy for the new and the traditional was for the writers in each camp to ignore the other, which they largely did. There is little evidence that the new critics cared about mass audiences, wherever they were to be found, or about the perceived jingoism of the traditionalists. There is evidence either of disdain, or a view by some Modernists that performance on stage or via any other medium was irrelevant to the study of Shakespeare. Certainly the so-called 'disintegration' of which Chambers had warned did not occupy the moderns whose approach to the texts did not admit the notion of time spent on speculation and fancy.

The new critics sought to take Shakespeare to a new intellectual level, aloof from the increasing power of the new economic and social order, redolent with the implication of influence by the masses. The rise of the mass-market, the growth of a newly empowered bourgeoisie, and the mechanical mass-production of ever more standardized products, represented to the modern writers an antithesis to the cultural order which they espoused. The rise of newspapers, advertising, cheap novels and magazines, although likely to have been viewed as a boon and as progress to the mass consumer, was noted with concern by some new writers, as stated by I.A Richards and Q.D. Leavis:

> We defend ourselves from the chaos which threatens us by stereotyping and standardizing both our utterances and our interpretations. And this threat, it must be insisted, can only grow greater as world communications through wireless and otherwise improve.[32]

Earlier in his book, Richards had also said that, 'any widespread diffusion of ideas and responses tends towards standardization, towards a levelling down'.[33] Q. D. Leavis went further, saying:

> The training of the reader who spends his time in cinemas, looking through magazines and newspapers, listening to jazz music, does not merely fail to help him, it prevents him from normal development…partly by providing him with a set of habits inimical to mental effort…the preconceptions acquired from the magazine story and the circulating library novel, are opposed to any possibility of grasping a serious novelist's intention.[34]

A twenty-first century reading of these three quotes might conclude that they were made by elderly scholars who were in despair of new generations of Philistine and feckless youth. In fact, I.A. Richards was thirty-six when he wrote *Practical Criticism*, and Q.D. Leavis twenty-four when she wrote *Fiction and the Reading Public*. The remarks suggest that both Richards and Leavis were taking high-handed views which had not been tested against the current social environment. Although Richards' worries about the threat of standardization and the proliferation of mass media is understandable, given their relatively sudden and dramatic appearance, neither he nor Q.D. Leavis had come to terms with the concept of a high-quality wireless, magazine or cinema output. Q.D. Leavis's term 'normal development' must also be questioned, on the basis of her determination of the 'normal' in a time of unprecedented change.

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[32] I.A. Richards, *Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgement* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1929), p. 340.
[33] *Ibid.* p. 248.
[34] Q.D. Leavis, *Fiction and the Reading Public* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1932), p. 180.

Eliot and *Criterion*

The views of Richards and Leavis suggest that the new, younger writers, instead of embracing the new concepts and ideas of the post-war period, were in fact retreating into reactionary and conservative stances which viewed with nostalgia earlier times of order and tradition. Their concerns had been raised by others some ten years previously. T.S. Eliot was also concerned with what he called 'the debilitating effect of mass culture', and in 1922, had launched the literary magazine *Criterion*, one of the aims of which was its dedication to 'the maintenance of standards and the reunification of a European intellectual community'.[35] Eliot was providing those who wished a divorce from the common, the ordinary and the mass, with a suitable vehicle for the dissemination of a cultural output which was considered appropriate, and which would sustain or widen the gap between the intellectually gifted and the rest of society.

The *apartheid* of the two intellectual strata was symbolized by the beginnings of *Criterion.* The journal was financed initially by Lady Rothermere, wife of the newspaper proprietor of the *Daily Mail,* a newspaper which was right-wing and jingoistic. Quite how Eliot secured Lady Rothermere's support is not clear, but what does seem clear is that she either misunderstood Eliot's intentions for the direction of the journal or that Eliot misled her on its objectives. She wrote to Eliot, negatively criticizing the first issue of *Criterion,* advocating the inclusion of more popular material by such writers as Katherine Mansfield. She eventually withdrew her support, and publication was taken over by Faber and Gwyer from 1926. This company later

[35] T.S. Eliot *Criterion* 1 (1922), p. 1.

became Faber and Faber of which Eliot was appointed as a director, a role for which he was well qualified, given his earlier career in banking and his current prominence as poet, playwright and literary critic.

Eliot set the standard for new writers by the advocation of introversion, and insulation from the common and the mass. The first issue of *Criterion* presented *The Waste Land* to the public for the first time, and sold 600 copies. The last issue was published in January, 1939. At no time during its life-span of seventeen years was Shakespeare featured as a primary influence. This might be explained by the points raised above that Shakespeare did not fit easily into the conventions of the new style of criticism, and was in any case well covered by scholars and critics elsewhere. It might even be ventured that Shakespeare was perhaps unfashionable in the rarefied heights of the new intellectual élites which sought to break with the historic, the narrative and the traditional.

Dealing only marginally with Shakespeare, Eliot and his poetry appeared to have some influence on other, usually younger writers. William Empson said for example:

> I do not know for certain how much of my own mind Eliot invented, let alone how much of it is a reaction against him. He is a very penetrating influence, perhaps not unlike the east wind.[36]

This last phrase suggests that Empson saw Eliot's influence as something if not malign, then perhaps persistently irritating, as sometimes the east wind can be. Richard Halpern helps to throw some light on Eliot's influence when he says:

> Eliot's profound influence on twentieth-century Shakespeare criticism …derived not only from his own Shakespeare criticism but also from his intellectual patronage of other writers and critics.[37]

[36] Roger Kimball, 'T.S. Eliot', *The New Criterion* 18 (1999), p. 1.

What Halpern may be missing is the fact that Eliot may well have exerted intellectual influence, but he also exerted financial influence, with growing power as the period wore on. Halpern, amongst many writers in their aim of lauding Eliot's literary intellectual output, fails to acknowledge that he was a shrewd businessman, investor and, increasingly, a figure of the new establishment, whether he embraced the notion or not. *Criterion,* under Eliot's editorship, published works by Woolf, Wystan Hugh Auden, Stephen Spender, Wyndham Lewis, Marcel Proust and Luigi Pirandello. Eliot had personally taken G. Wilson Knight's *Wheel of Fire* to the Oxford University Press and more or less demanded that they publish it. The *New Criterion,* as it became known in 1927, after briefly being called the *Monthly Criterion,* was, in its original form, declared by Eliot to be a literary review, but as the years passed it became a convenient vehicle for Eliot's own poetry such as *Ash Wednesday* and *The Hollow Men*, and as a workshop for the poetry of those in tune with his and other new writing.

Leavis and *Scrutiny*

In 1932, F.R. Leavis founded *Scrutiny*, a quarterly review which ran for nineteen volumes until its final issue in 1953. The journal never exceeded a circulation of 750 in the 1930s, its first issue being a print-run of 100. The most pressing task of this new journal, according to Francis Mulhern, was 'to undertake an investigation of the contemporary world.'[38] In spite of his reservations on the 'contemporary world', Leavis was to play an active role within it, particularly in respect of education, discussed in the next chapter.

[37] Richard Halpern, *Shakespeare among the Moderns* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 22.
[38] Francis Mulhern, *The Moment of Scrutiny* (London: NLB, 1979), p. 48.

Leavis, who was thirty-five in 1930, was initially influenced by Eliot but by the time *Scrutiny* was established, had developed a multi-disciplined and a socially and politically aware position which was to bring him friends and enemies in equal measure. Neither he nor or his wife were afraid to advocate a cultural hierarchy in which those who were considered to possess the appropriate intellectual stature should be recognized. He took a robust stance on such things as Richards' concerns upon 'levelling down', mentioned above, and the need to recognize, in his own terms, that to attempt to treat literature as a means of uniting society was an impossible concept. In a response to the left-leaning Dover Wilson, Leavis said:

> 'Shakespeare', I once heard Mr. Dover Wilson say, 'was not a highbrow'. True. There were no 'highbrows' in Shakespeare's time. It was possible for Shakespeare to write plays that were at once popular drama and poetry that could be appreciated only by an educated minority. *Hamlet* appealed at a number of levels of response, from the highest downwards. The same is true of *Paradise Lost, Clarissa, Don Juan, Tom Jones.*…The same is not true of *The Waste Land, Ulysses* or *To the Lighthouse.* These works are read only by a very small specialized public and are beyond the reach of the vast majority of those who consider themselves educated.[39]

At first sight, this quotation appears to demonstrate arrogance and intellectual snobbery, but what it actually does is exemplify the dilemma of Shakespeare in those modern times. Leavis was writing *Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture* polemically, to draw attention to what he saw as the impending crisis of a clash between the many and the few. Such contests had occurred before in other centuries, but in this one, the masses, certainly according to Q.D. Leavis, were receiving support from the new media of radio, talking pictures and mass-circulation newspapers and magazines. In the comments cited above, Leavis appears to imply that Shakespeare

[39] F.R. Leavis, *Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture* (Cambridge: The Minority Press, 1930, repr. The Arden Library, 1979), p. 25.

can appeal 'from the highest downwards', but is not in the same intellectually elevated category as Eliot, Joyce or Woolf. This may well be the case, depending upon how intellectualism is evaluated, but it indicates an unusual hybrid characteristic applied to Shakespeare. In turn, it poses the question again of whether or not Shakespeare can exist in both niche and mass markets. The last sentence of Leavis's quotation suffers from some lack of definition; the reader is left to ponder on the constituency of this 'very small specialized public', and of who comprise 'the vast majority of those who consider themselves educated'. 'Consider' is perhaps the word which robs Leavis of absolute credibility in this particular example, in that its vagueness implies that he is unclear of what he means by 'educated'.

Leavis's comments almost define the schism about which this chapter is concerned. Stanley Wells tries to isolate it when he says that

> …many [literary] critics, even if they were interested in the theatre, tended to make no connexion between it and their academic work…the vocabulary and techniques of literary criticism are more sophisticated than those of theatrical criticism.[40]

The word 'sophisticated' here might be the word which Leavis was trying to avoid, but it tends to bear out a view that Shakespeare can exist conveniently on two or more planes. This accommodates Leavis's 'specialised public' *and* the 'vast majority' who could not seek, or most likely would not wish to seek membership of it. Hazlitt's comments, mentioned earlier, show that this 'division of appreciation' was not new, but in the *milieu* of the inter-war era it took on greater significance when deconstruction and close-reading of Shakespeare's texts became sophisticated, intellectualised, modern and fashionable.

[40] Stanley Wells, 'Shakespeare Scholarship and the Modern Theatre' in *Bulletin of John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 69 (1986), 276-293, pp. 276 & 278.

An observation of Peter Hall, in his *Diaries*, indicates that there may have been some synthesis between the opposing factions on Shakespeare study versus performance criticism. Hall said that it was:

> …comical to think that Leavis hated the theatre and never went to it. He has had more influence on the contemporary theatre than any other critic.[41]

This may mean that Hall himself was influenced by Leavis more than any other critic, but it might also be seen that the Leavis style of criticism was instructive to directors and actors wishing to get to grips with the nuances and ambiguities of the texts. The 'specialised public' aiding the 'vast majority'? Whether Leavis hated the theatre, and never attended it, is questionable, but he has, with others such as Knights, Empson *et al* , by their concentration upon 'meaning', to the exclusion of peripheral plot and narrative, almost certainly given those directors alert enough to pay attention, an insight which may have been overlooked. A more modern example of the conflation of the intellect and the practical might be that of Hall himself, or John Barton with whom both academics and theatre critics would all most likely be at ease. The condition which distinguished the new critics of the inter-war years from other times was perhaps their overt social and political awareness and their concern for the integrity of the cultural heights in a society which was experiencing radical change.

Richards *et al.*

Up to the time of the period under review, the preservation of cultural standards was maintained, apparently seamlessly, behind the protective shield of a cultural establishment which was unthreatened by an emerging literate working class and a rapidly expanding and financially secure middle class. The phenomenon of the

[41] Peter Hall, *Diaries*, ed. by John Goodwin (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1983), p. 347.

rise of a mass culture after the war could be ignored, as it may have been by many scholars and critics, or it could be questioned and resisted. A twenty-first century perspective on this has the great disadvantage of hindsight: in the context of the early 1920s, the sheer novelty of previously unconsidered developments were as new to those who experienced them as the internet, international terrorism, multi-channel television and mass air-travel was to the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. I.A. Richards, some years before Leavis, said in 1924:

> It is perhaps premature to envisage a collapse of values, a transvaluation by which popular taste replaces trained discrimination. Yet commercialism has done strange things; we have not yet fathomed the more sinister potentialities of the cinema and the loudspeaker.[42]

In *Principles of Literary Criticism,* Richards mused upon the crisis, as he saw it, of a country unwilling to control an emerging culture which would be at ease with the science and technology which was threatening to dominate society, not only with the 'cinema and the loudspeaker', but also with newspapers, magazines, novels and the mass market in general. Richards wrote the above before the advent of talking pictures, and when public radio was barely two years old, but he accentuates only the 'sinister potentialities' and excludes any positive opportunities of the new media. Today's reader might conclude that Richards was making a sound point; in fact a reader in 1939 also might well have looked back and thought, in the current light of film and radio propaganda then prevalent, that Richards was spectacularly prescient. What Richards reflected however was the pessimism and the dystopia which pervaded the literary establishment of the day and which had been at the core of *The Waste Land* some years before.

[42] I.A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (New York and London: Harcourt, Brace, K. Paul, Trench, Trubner,1930), pp. 25-26

Chris Baldick, in *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, discusses the influence of Richards on the whole of criticism, both in the period under review and of writers up to the present day in the twenty-first century:

> For Richards, one of the most alarming effects of the war had been the way in which it had revealed society's apparently limitless capacity for self-deception …The core of Richards's critical concern: the safeguarding the cultural order against a threatened chaos through the conciliatory agency of poetry.[43]

Richards took a more practical and didactic approach than some of his contemporaries who saw nothing but chaos with no remedy. Richards was a supporter of the Newbolt Report discussed in the next chapter, which advocated the promotion of English at all levels of education. In this he would have been at odds with many of his contemporaries who believed that pandering to the masses at a time when intellectualism and academic rigour were called for in the fight against the mediocre and the philistine, was a backward step.

The Newbolt Report also advocated the wider teaching of Shakespeare, but here the difficulty lay in the question of whether or not there was anything which would inspire a moral reaffirmation as required by Richards, who said in 1924:

> Human conditions and possibilities have altered more in a hundred years than they had in the previous ten thousand, and the next fifty may overwhelm us unless we can devise a more adaptable morality. The view that we need in this tempestuous turmoil of change is a Rock to shelter under or to cling to, rather than an efficient aeroplane in which to ride it, is comprehensible but mistaken.[44]

What Richards meant by 'a more adaptable morality' is not clear. It begs the question whether or not a morality can be made 'more adaptable' or even whether a new morality can actually be devised. Richards' concerns for the future of society required

[43] Chris Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 135/137.
[44] I.A. Richards, *The Principle of Literary Criticism* (New York and London: Harcourt, Brace, K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1930). p. 43.

a complete revision of manners and attitudes; this might be seen as an ideal which, although much desired, was shown to be unachievable. Perhaps however, the cultural leaders of the day were regretting what they may have seen as the imminent demise of a stratum of society to which they belonged or to which they aspired. The despairing writers and literary critics had certain things in common, a feature which seems to have attracted little comment from subsequent commentators up to and including the present day. The common link was that of class and background. Eliot for example, came from a wealthy family in St. Louis, his father a successful businessman who sent Thomas to an expensive preparatory school. Richards was the son of rich middle-class parents, and later studied philosophy at Cambridge. The Leavis family owned a large music shop in Cambridge, and Frank attended a local independent private school, later spending most of the rest of his life at Downing College.

Bloomsbury

The members of the 'Bloomsbury Group' were mainly from upper middle-class professional families. Some members, such as E.M. Forster, Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell, had private incomes; Clive Bell was wealthy by any definition. All of the male members of the group but one were educated at Trinity or King's, and became members of a secret society known as 'The Cambridge Apostles'. The social *milieu* of the group tended not unnaturally towards the upper middle-class or the aristocratic rather than the common. Politically, the members, however socially remote, were not uniformly of the right wing of politics. The radical and socialist leanings of some members appear at odds with their background. John Maynard Keynes became a prominent figure of the Left, believing in such notions as early state intervention in economic matters, and the primacy of the needs of society over the

freedoms of the individual. James Woolf, on the other hand, espoused the cause of the freedom of the individual and the reduction of government influence. Most of the members of the Bloomsbury Group supported universal female suffrage, and all members at some time declared the war to have been a crime of neglect by an inept and uncaring government which was still failing to address the needs of the post-war state. Shakespeare was not a subject of prime concern for the Bloomsbury Group and its affiliates, although the subject was not ignored, largely due to its omnipresence and the fact that to ignore it would have been an omission which might have raised questions about the literary credentials of a coterie trying to reinvigorate the study of literature.

Eliot was to maintain a role of mentor and exemplar for the new critics throughout the period. At its beginning Eliot, in his essay on *Hamlet* in 1919, had said that 'as a work of art, *Hamlet* is an artistic failure', the sort of comment which was to help provide a catalyst for the new generation of writers.[45] Virginia Woolf, in her essay 'Twelfth Night at the Old Vic', written in 1933, had complained of 'those who run from book to stage', and that 'performance impaired the text'.[46] Eliot also said in 1932:

> The whole of Shakespeare's work is *one* poem, and it is the poetry of it in this sense, not the poetry of isolated lines and passages or the poetry of the single figures which he created, that matters most.[47]

These quotations demonstrate the dissatisfaction with which the new wave of critics viewed the awkward subject of Shakespeare. Eliot, purporting to judge *Hamlet* as an artistic artefact, was obviously at odds with the likes of Robertson and Dover Wilson *et al*, and was setting up a controversial thesis, either by accident or design, which

[45] T.S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1920), p. 98
[46] Virginia Woolf, *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1943), p. 34
[47] T.S. Eliot, 'John Ford' in *Elizabethan Dramatists* (London: Faber and Faber, 1933), p. 132.

would inevitably result in some discussion amongst the Bradleyites and other traditionalists. Who, it might have been asked, ever claimed that *Hamlet* was written with the aim of becoming a 'work of art'? Is it likely that *Twelfth Night* was written for any other reason than to be performed on stage? Both of these questions would have been irrelevant to Eliot, Woolf, Knights, Empson and the other new critics, for the question introduces external considerations with no bearing upon what to them was the crucial importance of the texts. It is more difficult to assess Eliot's judgment on the works of Shakespeare as '*one* poem', a view which on the face of it is impractical. Eliot however, may well have seen Shakespeare as 'Shakespeare' in the sense of the corporate whole, not unlike the everyday references to Shakespeare rather than to an individual play or poem. What seems clear is that agreement between the traditional and the revolutionary would be unlikely, and that the 'stage versus page' argument would continue to divide the literary establishment.

The new critics employed a strict methodology, a more scientific approach to literature. The deconstruction of Shakespeare's texts and the notion of analysis as opposed to synthesis was mirrored by other new approaches, some of which were developments and extrapolations of earlier work. Explorations of imagery and symbolism in the texts during the period were entirely in tune with the businesslike analysis of the new school.

Science

William Davenant's *Macbeth* of 1664, and later, John Dryden's preface to the adaptation of *Troilus and Cressida* in 1679, entitled *The Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy*, created an awareness of the texts as separately examinable from plot and character. Samuel Johnson in 1765, in the preface to his edition of the plays, makes

frequent references to images and symbols. A reader of Shakespeare could hardly fail to notice such things as references to knives and cuttings in *The Merchant of Venice* or the frequent use of deathly imagery in *Hamlet* and of water in *The Tempest.* To go further, it would be a careless student who did not recognize that in every play there is a trail of images and symbols.

The first systematically researched studies of imagery and symbolism may be credited to Caroline Spurgeon who, in her lecture to the British Academy in 1931 said:

> I embarked on this task of collecting and classifying the images because it seemed to me that it might provide a new method of approach to Shakespeare, and I believe I have, by happy fortune, hit on such a method hitherto untried which is yielding interesting and important results…I believe that a poet, and more especially a dramatic poet, to some extent 'gives himself away' in his images.[48]

Her candid delivery does however, raise some points of motive and of her conclusions in this particular quotation. Spurgeon was sixty-one at the time of the lecture, and was no *ingénue* in the field of Shakespeare study. A lightly cynical view of her words might lead to a suspicion that she had been casting about for something which was different in the field, and then perhaps by some serendipity had 'discovered' a new view of imagery in the plays. She does in fact speak of 'happy fortune' rather than 'diligent research', a phrase which might have been used by someone of more guile and pomposity than Spurgeon. Nevertheless, she exemplifies the quest for innovation which pervaded the literary establishment, which was seen by some to be sabotaging the area of criticism to the point of fragmentation.

In the second part of her quotation when she suggests that a dramatic poet 'gives himself away', she seems to be avoiding the fact that on one level, Shakespeare

[48] Caroline F. E. Spurgeon, 'Shakespeare's Iterative Imagery', in *Aspects of Shakespeare*, ed. by J.W. McKail (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 255-286, p. 257.

was a popular playwright, most likely with the single aim of populating a theatre. Would it not be possible for a gifted storyteller to exercise his considerable imagination without betraying any personal trait or belief? Spurgeon's comprehensive research would not have detached her from the basic premise that Shakespeare was an acclaimed dramatist with a commendable reputation, a certain highly varied output to maintain, and with a need for money to be taken at the door of the theatre.

It is unlikely that it could ever be proved that Shakespeare 'gives himself away' in his images, but the images and symbols, as Spurgeon declares, are undoubtedly present and so were likely to have an impact upon the Elizabethan auditor. Spurgeon takes care to use the phrase 'to some extent', which absolves her of the need to prove anything. Whether or not Shakespeare was consciously or unconsciously repeating words and phrases which resulted in 'image clusters', as derived by Edward Armstrong in his 1946 book *Shakespeare's Imagination,* which owed much to Spurgeon's work, is a matter of interest to those who seek to 'explain' the man. This is not an unreasonable aim or uninteresting area of research, but may be the pursuit of a goal which is elusive.

C.J. Sissons in his lecture in 1934 on 'The Mythical Sorrows of Shakespeare', and R.W. Chambers in his lecture, 'The Jacobean Shakespeare' in 1937, both dwell upon the risks of trying to identify the mind of Shakespeare via his art. Their main arguments accentuate the need to consider the conditions and the audiences of the days in which the plays were written, claiming for example that illiterate audiences with little experience of the world outside their own local community would be more open to suggestive imagery than modern audiences, and that therefore the writers of the day took advantage of this. This itself is a questionable assumption, as there is

little available to the researcher about the opinions and beliefs of audiences of the early 1600s, other than anecdote and guesswork.

Una Ellis-Fermor's translation of Wolfgang Clemens book of 1936, *Shakespeare's Bilder, ihre Entwichlung und ihre Funktionen in Dramatischen Werk,* provides a synthesis of the imagery thesis. In it Clemen says:

> …to interpret the developments of this particular aspect of his art in terms of the whole development of the poet and, from the use of images in successive periods of his creative work, to show how the style and methods of expression grew, developed and changed.[49]

The point here is that Clemen is accepting the notion of clear imagery and symbolism in Shakespeare's plays, but insists that they are basic dramatic devices which while they may be saying something about the dramatist, the notion could be inaccurate, irrelevant or fanciful.

The 'scientific' approach to Shakespeare was an exercise which was initiated in modern times by Fleay and Furnivall and encouraged by the New Shakespere Society, mainly as a means of departing from what had become a sterile area. Whether the findings, if any, of the scientific approach were acceptable or not to the moderns in search of textual truths, it is not entirely clear. It might be assumed that Spurgeon's attempts to explain Shakespeare the man, were considered irrelevant to those who sought only to explore the texts. More importantly, the notion of literary criticism with a social mission, begged the question as to whether or not the study and criticism of Shakespeare had a role to play in it. Could, for example the study of Shakespeare contribute to I.A. Richards's notion of moral rearmament coupled to literary excellence. Given the traditional and emblematic appeal of Shakespeare, the question had to be considered that the 'institution' could be adapted to assist in the

[49] Cited in Kenneth Muir's, 'Fifty Years of Shakespeare Criticism', *Shakespeare Survey* 4 (1949), p. 20.

maintenance of the high cultural order which was desired by Richards, the Leavises, Woolf *et al*. In this respect it might be inferred that Shakespeare was part of the problem rather than of the solution: a large component of the immoveable 'Rock' which Richards mentions above. Perhaps most contentious of all was the question of Shakespeare's appeal on different levels: to the intellectual minority, to the general reader and to the theatre-goer. The unquantifiable influence which a coterie of highly privileged and educated people exerted was probably a minor matter, and even if such influence existed, it affected only a small fraction of the population. This argument, of course, ignores the power of minorities which, even in a democratic constituency, can often prevail, subject to the security of their platform and the intensity of their message.

The social exclusivity of the new critics and their separation from the mainstream critics, concerned more with historical, biographical and character, can be exaggerated. In modern and Modernist England between the wars, Shakespeare was either adapted to suit the new generation of critics and scholars, or was studied and criticized much in the tradition of Bradley, Dover Wilson or Abercrombie. Modernism's literary factions, their cerebral journals and their revolutionary theories flourished in an environment of their own design, apparently not caring whether or not they impinged upon the nation's consciousness. As the next chapter will show however, the influence of certain factions on education was exemplary. Modernism had an impact upon the study and teaching of Shakespeare, whose separation from history became a *sine qua non* for the teaching of the new subject of English at the universities.

Modernism, itself an abstract notion of the summation of various theories and philosophies, was eventually subsumed into the normal and the natural. In other

words, after a time the word 'Modernism' lost its capitalization. L.C. Knights was described by Halpern as 'an enthusiastic disciple of Modernism.'[50] He underlined the break with tradition when he said, after the period, that:

> The attempt to reconstruct the Elizabethan or Renaissance meaning of Shakespeare's plays is almost inevitably attended by the danger of obscuring their imaginative life.[51]

Knights, along with all of the other moderns, rebuilt Shakespeare as a product of the twentieth century. They had few choices in some respects, one being that Shakespeare was so omnipresently famous that he could not be ignored, so a new Shakespeare, which fitted modernist ideals, had to be constructed. The modernists adopted a pragmatic approach in all of the arts, which was based upon the times in which they lived. There was little point dwelling upon the past, went the argument, when there was so much happening in the present. If there was an anti-philistine strain in their new order, it was inevitable given the frustration which must have been present when looking at the perceived inability of the masses to comprehend the new approaches.

The main point in the foregoing is to illustrate that literary criticism, and that of Shakespeare in particular, reached a turning point in the inter war years, and that the 'New Criticism' did, to a limited extent rescue the subject of Shakespeare from the moribund state into which it had fallen before the war. There were risks which included the cost of risking Shakespeare's wider appeal. This however, was not in the hands of the new critics, but in those of the editors, educationalists, academics and scholars who were charged with the promotion and development of the English language.

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[50] Richard Halpern, *Shakespeare Among the Moderns* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 33.
[51] L.C. Knights, *Further Explorations* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), p. 145.

Chapter Three

The English Language, Education and Shakespeare

Introduction and Background

In order to understand the concentration by certain government departments and the educational establishment in Great Britain upon the English language and literature in the first three decades of the twentieth century, it is helpful to consider as a primary influence, the emergence of the new state of Germany from 1871. The new Chancellor Otto von Bismarck and his cabinet, recognizing the need for the reinforcement of unity amongst the erstwhile collection of states, grand duchies, principalities and free cities, seized upon the German language and upon German culture and ethnic traditions in order to achieve it. Germany also, between 1871 and the turn of the century, established a new system of state legislation and control, which in turn introduced social reforms in many areas, including education at all levels. Coincidental to this, as mentioned in the previous chapter, was the quasi-proprietorial stance which the new Germany's academic establishment adopted regarding the works of Shakespeare.

The education reforms in Britain during this time saw the introduction of various radical Acts of Parliament which were connected to education, suggesting that Britain had neglected this particular field. The founding of the Board of Education in 1899 supports the view that special attention was considered necessary. Up to 1870, education in England had been mainly a private affair, but four Acts between 1880 and 1902 changed the course of education and guided it along the path of state-funding and control, but not to the complete exclusion of private education. The

Elementary Education Act of 1880 required amongst other things that there should be compulsory education for all children aged five to ten years. The 1893 Elementary Education (School Attendance) Act raised the leaving age to eleven years and then to thirteen. The Voluntary Schools Act of 1897 provided grants to elementary schools which were not funded by school boards; these schools typically comprised Church schools. The so-called 'Balfour' Education Act of 1902 created Local Education Authorities which funded those Grammar schools which had previously been funded privately. *Laissez-faire*, the doctrine of the high conservatism of the Victorian age, was replaced by large-scale state intervention and management. All of this legislation is important in the investigation of the teaching of English language and literature as it clarified new attitudes to teaching, recognizing the advances which were to come in the education of the masses and in the elevation of the language.

The British Empire Shakespeare Society, the English Association, and the English Speaking Union.

It should not be inferred from the above that the study of English language and literature was brought about solely by reaction to outside influences. Mechanics' Institutes and working-men's colleges had introduced English as a formal subject of study from the 1840s. English Literature became part of the entrance examinations to the Civil Service which was eventually entrusted with its proseletyzation in the countries of the Empire. Literature was considered to be a sound background for public speaking, called Rhetoric in the ancient institutions, such as the University of Edinburgh's 'Chair of Belles Lettres and Rhetoric'. Another of the ancient universities, Oxford, had introduced a School of English in 1893; Cambridge followed, but not until 1917. Baldick, in *The Social Mission of English Criticism*

provides an encapsulation of the values of the study of English Literature when he refers to it as 'an agent of social enlightenment'[1].

The link between the English language, English Literature and the Empire was considered important enough for the founding, by Greta Morritt, of the British Empire Shakespeare Society in 1901 which advocated nationwide participation in individual readings, the formation of Society clubs, and the production of plays. Henry Irving's appointment as the first President attested to the importance placed by the society on performance, either via full productions or via 'costume recitals' which entailed the performance of better-known scenes from the plays, performed in various types of venue up and down the country. The Society produced *Much Ado About Nothing in* Stratford in 1909 and *As You Like It* in Derby the same year. The unwittingly ominous appointment of Princess Marie-Louise of Schleswig-Holstein as President of the Society would later affect its popularity. The Society was cosmopolitan and generally non-academic in its constituency, and it was bardolatrous to a degree whilst at the same time jingoistic and imperialist, awarding annual prizes to representatives and contributors from the colonies. The Society's official gazette was first published in 1915, continuing until 1939. There is no evidence that the Society was taken seriously by the academic establishment, and no mention of it was contained in the Newbolt Report (q.v.)

The English Association, which was founded in 1906, was a different organization from the British Empire Shakespeare Society in that its approach depended for the most part upon professional and academic inputs, and its aims were simple and precise. The prime mover of the Association, Easton S. Valentine, expressed its stance as one founded upon the notion of an elevated and clearly defined

[1] Chris Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 58.

subject called 'English', established and represented in schools and universities. Valentine said:

> The term [English] is somewhat vague; its connotation should be defined …Subjects like geography and handwriting, long associated with it should be relegated to their proper departments…A strong Association might do much to secure for the study of our language and literature a place even in the highest forms of school curricula.[2]

The English Association wasted little time in bringing its own views of Shakespeare to the attention of the literary and educational establishments. In Pamphlet No.7 of 1908, entitled *The Teaching of Shakespeare in Schools*, it condemns in its first lines the attention given to literature in schools generally, saying:

> …in most secondary schools it is difficult, as matters stand at present, to secure more than two periods a week for the teaching of English Literature. These are, of course, utterly inadequate for the purpose…[3]

The Association was not a regulatory or legislative body, but a group of like-minded scholars and enthusiasts which, whilst perhaps commanding attention amongst the legislators, did not have the functional remit to change the systems of education. In spite of this, the Association did, via its complex network of functionaries in and out of the government establishment, provide in the early years of its foundation, a notion of change which would eventually help to reform the educational system. The initial problem for the Association was that its champions were, in a time of difficult communications within the country, not ideally placed. Valentine was, for example, the Head of English at Dundee High School, whilst Oliver Elton was the Professor of English Literature at the newly created University of Liverpool. None of the ancient

[2] William Baker and Elaine Treharne with Ellen Lucas, *The English Association: One Hundred Years On* (London: The English Association, 2006), p. 3.
[3] The English Association. *The Teaching of English in Schools.* Pamphlet No.7. 1908.

universities supplied a representative in the early stages, but this does not imply a lack of interest or of enthusiasm but merely perhaps a guarded and watchful approach.

The recognition of the work of the English Association came at the end of the war when, for all the reasons described above, the language and its literature became an area of concentration to an unprecedented degree. In October 1918, Stanley Leathes and William Paton Ker published the English Association Pamphlet No. 26 entitled 'The Teaching of English at Universities', in which Leathes allows himself some castigation of what he saw as the parlous state of the learning of English. At the outset, he says that

> The first need of every freshman, although he may not know it, is to learn to write English. It is easy to say that he ought to have learnt to write English at school. So he ought, and, by the efforts of this Association, the number who come up to the University unable to turn one sentence, or to put two together, has diminished and will no doubt further diminish.[4]

Leathes' conviction that English should be available for study at all universities, then numbering twenty-three in Great Britain, is apparent throughout the pamphlet. At one point he advocates an end to examinations on the grounds that they encourage rote-learning and thereby miss the point of the study. He does however accentuate the need for literature and language to unify the people. His part of the pamphlet ends when he states:

> But above all, the kinetic unity of national life and thought and literary expression is a thing that [the student] may miss, or only attain after painful and fruitless wanderings. And that can be made clear by the most skilled and inspiring teacher, if history, language and literature are treated as various manifestations of a single spirit.[5]

Whilst the two quotes above are included in order to demonstrate the evangelistic zeal of certain people of the times, they have to be taken in the context of Britain almost at

[4] The English Association, *The Teaching of English at the Universities.* Pamphlet No. 26, October, 1918, p. 3-4.
[5] *Ibid.* p. 14.

the end of the most destructive war in its history. The exaggerations of the first quotation and the somewhat hyperbolic language of the second might be excused as the passion of two scholars who are overstating their beliefs in order to achieve greater effect.

Leathes does not mention Shakespeare anywhere in the pamphlet nor does Ker in his note, although both refer to the Romantic poets from time to time. This omission should not however, be construed as an aversion to Shakespeare. In fact, it could be that Shakespeare is omitted as a tactical recognition that an inclusion might be seen as pandering to the bardolators in the specific cases which they cite. Ker backs Leathes to a point:

> The limit which Mr. Leathes would draw for those *in statu pupillari* seems to leave his pupils exposed to some cruelty. They are allowed to read Chaucer, but if they study the language in which Chaucer wrote, they are no longer historical and modern, but archaeological and philological.[6]

But in this quotation he is really pointing to something which Leathes missed, which was the difficulty in defining Literature and containing the study of it within such a definition. It might be asked whether 'Shakespeare' could be substituted for 'Chaucer' in the above, although the Association did not neglect Shakespeare, who was the subject of two other pamphlets in addition to the one quoted previously, they are: 'The Impersonal Aspect of Shakespeare's Art' and 'A Shakespeare Reference Library', both by Sidney Lee.

In the Newbolt Report, discussed later, the English Association was referenced eight times, always exemplarily. Many of the witnesses called to the Newbolt committee were members of the English Association, and two of its pamphlets, 'English Papers in Examinations for Pupils of School Age in England and Wales' and

[6] *Ibid.* p. 15.

'The Essentials of English Teaching', were given as ideals of the new direction for English. None of the foregoing is surprising in view of the fact that nine of the members of the Newbolt Report committee were members of the English Association. As with the British Empire Shakespeare Society, the English Association advocated the use of drama to enhance the knowledge and particularly the enjoyment of English; in this connection Shakespeare was given primary consideration. This was also not surprising in view of the number of champions of Shakespeare who featured at various times in the Association's work: A.C. Bradley, for example, was described in one obituary as 'the father of the English Association'; Harley Granville Barker and Caroline Spurgeon's involvement on the committee, and the presence of Walter Raleigh, ensured that Shakespeare was kept in the foreground.

The English Speaking Union was founded in 1918 by Sir Evelyn Wrench, with a mission statement 'to promote international understanding and friendship through the use of the English language'. Its journal, *Landmark*, was launched in 1919; the Union is still active today. Earlier in this chapter, and in the Introduction to this thesis, the notion of a Renaissance of English culture which was found necessary to protect and promote English-ness and all that its champions advocated, has been stressed. The English Speaking Union's aims compounded those of the organizations discussed above, and extended them to include all of the seventy-five or so countries which used English as a first language. It would however, be naïve not to recognize other motives inherent in the mission statement, particularly given Sir Evelyn Wrench's colonial background and his subsequent editorship of the *Spectator* from 1925 to 1932. The Union is included here as a footnote to this section of the chapter, to accentuate the reactions of those who feared for the future of the Empire.

The Newbolt Report

At the end of the war the Government was faced with a series of new educational issues which were emerging in Britain and many of the western powers as they industrialized further, issues which had to be confronted if they were to generate an educated workforce able to adapt to new conditions. The first of these concerned the growing number of primary, secondary and tertiary students, brought about by successive acts of Parliament, which provided, amongst other things, compulsory education at primary and secondary levels and a defined school-leaving age. The new five large 'civic' universities, founded from 1900 to 1909 (Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield and Bristol), an almost thirty per-cent increase in the total number, created opportunities for study for many who would not previously have been able to enter the ancient universities or the older Victorian ones, thus producing a substantial increase in student numbers. A second problem, potentially more serious than the first, was that at the war's end, the lack of employment for returning servicemen, the overthrowing of old regimes in Europe, particularly in Russia, and the gradual recognition of the war's casualty rates, produced an environment of resentment and mistrust, largely but not solely amongst the working classes, thereby perhaps providing reasons and opportunities for revolution. A further problem not perhaps obvious to the general public but fully recognized by the government, was the potential loss of British influence in foreign and Empire matters, brought about on the one hand by the rise of American economic and military power, and on the other by the growing and palpable disaffection of some Commonwealth countries, notably India, to the notion of Empire itself.

The Newbolt Report, is correctly styled as 'The Teaching of English in England: Being the Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed by the President of the Board of Education to Inquire into the Position of English in the

Educational System of England' The committee was not ostensibly briefed to address all of the problems identified above, but did, subtly or otherwise seek to introduce a new 'Englishness' into England via the study and promotion of the English language and its Literature at all levels of learning. Shakespeare played a part in the vision which Newbolt and his committee eventually determined. The exclusion of the Scots, Welsh and Irish apparently excited no protest or criticism of any weight at the time. In the preface to the Report it is noted that

> Our terms of reference do not include Wales, and, though we have heard certain evidence from Wales, our Report throughout assumes English to be the vernacular and is intended to refer to England only.[7]

The choice of Sir Henry Newbolt (1862-1938), knighted in 1915, and nearly sixty years of age in 1921, lends weight to the argument that the Report was not intended merely as a plan for the reform of education. Newbolt was known in England, both within and without academic circles, his poetry, for example, achieving recognition and acclaim with such as *Drake's Drum* in 1897 and *Vitaï Lampada* ('Play up! Play up! And play the game!') in the same year, and *St. George's Day* in 1918, shortly before the committee met for the first time. Before and after the war Newbolt directed Shakespeare on stage. In 1916 shortly after knighthood, he was appointed head of the War Propaganda Bureau, an organization which was created to bolster the flagging resolve of the population in the light of heavy war casualties and also to counter the propaganda of enemy nations. It seems that Newbolt was carefully chosen as a man who, although appealing to a wide audience, was nevertheless respected by the political and academic establishments: a Corpus Christi scholar, LL.D., D.Litt, poet and author. He was a good 'all-rounder' whose patriotism was

[7] *The Teaching of English in England* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1921), p. 3.

unquestioned and probably seen as a highly desirable qualification for such an appointment.

The other thirteen members of the committee included Frederick Samuel Boas, Professor Charles Harding Firth, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, Professor Caroline F.E. Spurgeon and J. Dover Wilson, 'H.M. Inspector' (of the Board of Education). The committee began its work in May, 1919, six months before the Armistice, which signifies some prescience on the part of its sponsors in that some estimate of the likely post-war social problems appears evident. Witnesses, of which there were 102 in total, included Headmasters and Head Mistresses from all types of schools, members of the Board of Education and of the Modern Languages Association. Individual witnesses included W.W. Greg, W.P. Ker, Sir Walter Raleigh, Professor Ernest de Selincourt and Professor G. Saintsbury.

The Terms of Reference for the committee were brief but embraced a wide area of research:

> To inquire into the position occupied by English (Language and Literature) in the educational system of England, and to advise how its study may best be promoted in schools of all types, including Continuation Schools, and in Universities, and other Institutions of Higher Education, regard being had to---
>
> (1) the requirements of a liberal education;
> (2) the needs of business, the professions and public services; and
> (3) the relation of English to other studies[8]

The ten chapters of the report were divided into 314 sections, with a further 105 conclusions and recommendations, and four appendices. It covered a wide range of subjects, as the Terms of Reference allows in order that Newbolt and his committee could cover those areas which promoted the covert aims discussed above. An example

[8] *Ibid.* p. 1.

of this is in Chapter V where in Section 143 regarding 'Day Continuation Schools' is mentioned that:

> It should make the pupil at least conscious of the past history of the English people and of their position and function in the existing family of nations.[9]

A further example of the recognition of the rising awareness of education amongst the working classes is shown under the general title of 'Adult Education' in a section entitled 'Literature in Workers' Educational Association Classes' where the report states:

> Despite the evidence we have received as to the hostility of the working-classes to literature, it is interesting to note that the number of tutorial and other W.E.A. classes taking literary subjects grows year by year.[10]

This is testimony to the notion that literature had been institutionalized for some time, and that the Newbolt Report was to some extent at least, a formalization of it in order to demonstrate government activity.

Showing on the following page of the report is a table which demonstrates a rise from 154 tutorial classes in 1914-15 to 287 in 1920-21, and the rise of those tutorial classes taking literature from fifteen to fifty-nine. The report then takes teachers to task, saying

> The tendency of some literary teachers to examine literary forms seems to establish the erroneous view that literature is divorced from life, that it is merely a pleasant but rather futile exercise in the art of expression. It matters very little to the worker whether a poem is a lyric or an epic, whether it is in trochees or iambics, he wants to know what it means, how it interprets life, the source and secret of its inspiration.[11]

[9] *Ibid.* p. 143.
[10] *Ibid.* p. 272.
[11] *Ibid.* p. 273

It was in this sort of context where Newbolt took a wary line inasmuch as on the one hand he must not applaud the working-classes to the point of condescension, nor must he on the other be seen to denigrate the efforts of the academic establishment to raise the awareness of the need for the maintenance or the enhancement of academic rigour.

The over-riding problem for Newbolt came about as a result of the arguments and counter-arguments described so far. The problem centred on the notion that if there were to be a rigid curriculum, then the subjects within it should be defined in order to provide a stable and understandable platform from which educationalists and teachers could operate. Unfortunately, as far as English language and literature were concerned, the foregoing identifies a lack of agreement upon what should be included or excluded, and to what level of understanding and appreciation of literature should students be expected to aspire. It is in this area where the study of Shakespeare is shown to be particularly difficult to fit into a study for all ages and abilities.

Shakespeare and Newbolt

There are various references to Shakespeare in the report, many of which are included in passing, coupled with other English writers: '…the language of Bacon and Shakespeare, Pitt, Fox, Byron and Shelly', and 'one of our witnesses supplied us with a list of books so used ranging from *Songs of Shakespeare* to *Alice in Wonderland.*'[12] What gradually emerges however is that although the committee retains a palpable enthusiasm for Shakespeare throughout the report, it has considerable difficulty in fitting Shakespeare into a modern context or into a plan for the future of the English language and its promotion.

[12] *Ibid.* pp. 54 & 83

The disparity between the language of Shakespeare and the English of the twentieth century is a theme which runs throughout the report. It is particularly put into the foreground by the German connection to Shakespeare via the German Shakespeare Society and the pre-war connections between King and Kaiser in the matter of their declared affection for Shakespeare. With some irritation the Newbolt committee notes that:

> When we sometimes slightingly contrast English indifference to Shakespeare with German enthusiasm, we forget that German-Shakespeare is written in a language that every German understands, and that English-Shakespeare is written in a language that every Englishman does not understand…Shakespeare's speech is so remote as to be in an unfamiliar tongue.[13]

Late in the report Newbolt contradicts some of the earlier assertions by witnesses on the popularity of Shakespeare amongst some students, especially as reported by one witness, the Headmistress of a girls' school, who reported the purchases of books by her students from 1917 as being: 150 by Tennyson, 540 by Shakespeare, thirty by Scott, 130 *Pilgrim's Progress.*[14] It may be that this particular headmistress was biased, and that her evidence was recorded selectively in order to keep Shakespeare in the foreground. This cannot be proved but it is not unknown for the selective evidence of witnesses to be used to further a particular case or argument, although there is no reason to assume the case here.

However much those committee members who might fairly be considered as proponents of Shakespeare - Wilson, Spurgeon, Newbolt himself, *et al* - sought to position Shakespeare prominently within the context of the report, some exasperation at the repeated observations by witnesses that he is 'too difficult' was evident in such comments as:

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[13] *Ibid.* p. 312.
[14] *Ibid.* p. 85.

> We feel no cause to dispute with those who tell us that Shakespeare is over the heads of the children. He is over the heads of us all. It is sufficient to say that in the schools, Shakespeare proves an immense success.[15]

Such a statement could be viewed as unworthy of a committee comprising so many experienced scholars: more specifically it identifies the perhaps impossible aim of attempting to set rigid terms in which Shakespeare, or any other writer, could be valued. To suggest for example that eleven year-old newcomers to Shakespeare should be resigned to the fact that they must simply accept that 'He is over the heads of us all' could be considered irresponsible and damaging to the promotion and teaching of Shakespeare, even though in one sense the statement might be true. The 'immense success' in the third sentence is also a hasty generalization, unproven either by evidence or statistics. At best, the report shows that Shakespeare when taught by certain methods, can hold the attention or generate enthusiasm amongst some students. Searching for a positive response from witnesses, the report makes such observations as 'Shakespeare, Dickens, Tennyson, Kingsley, rub shoulders with today's boys' and girls' authors'.[16] A teacher giving evidence in the same section says

> The oldest boys have been interested in Shakespeare when a play was taken through by an appreciative teacher who dramatized certain scenes, but I wonder whether Shakespeare is not too difficult for an elementary school …teachers feel that children ought not to grow up ignorant of Shakespeare and Scott.[17]

This shows again the over-riding concern and problems of those teachers who whilst enthusiastic about Shakespeare, cannot see a way for Shakespeare to be accessible to all children, whether attending a new State school, or an old Public school. The report states that 'We have to accept as inevitable the fact that many passages of

[15] *Ibid.* p. 86.
[16] *Ibid.* p. 85
[17] *Ibid.* p. 86

Shakespeare cannot be understood by children.'[18] This is also an unsatisfactorily developed conclusion, but it is understandable in the light of much larger numbers of children populating schools since the new legislation came into effect. It may have been more politic, and certainly more accurate to have concluded that Shakespeare could not be understood by *all* children, an obvious and acceptable conclusion. This however, could also be seen as faulty in that it does not take into account how much and which parts of Shakespeare are under discussion. Perhaps for example, all children might understand a short passage from *Macbeth* but might have great difficulties with the word-play of *Love's Labours Lost.* Whilst the Newbolt Report could not be expected to prescribe which parts of Shakespeare should be taught to whom, it demonstrates in its vagueness its inability to suggest a strategic approach.

The propaganda element of literature, framed in an over-arching rhetoric of considerable sweep, can be seen here:

> There is a tendency in some quarters to treat literature as a branch of History or Sociology. This is, in our view, a dangerous mistake. All great literature has in it two elements: the contemporary and the eternal. On the one hand Shakespeare and Pope tell us what Englishmen were like at the beginning of the 17th and 18th centuries. On the other hand they tell us what all men are like in all countries and at all times.[19]

The last two sentences if anything, support the view that literature really *is* a 'branch of History and Sociology', given the definition of both in the Oxford English Dictionary. The idea that Shakespeare and Pope could 'tell us what men are like' in 1920s England may be fanciful, but as a 'mission statement' of the times the above quotation stands as an effective rallying call for the cause of English Literature. It could, of course be argued that Shakespeare does tell us what men are like, but even a

[18] *Ibid.* p. 314.
[19] *Ibid.* p. 205

superficial view of the texts might show that as role models, the aristocratic traitors in *Henry V*, Coriolanus and his contempt of the proletariat, Falstaff's *louche* conduct, and various characters in *Titus Andronicus*, might not suit the aims of the report, although telling 'what men (and women) are like' quite dramatically. In any case, the question must be asked whether these philosophical musings are relevant to the main consideration as to *how* Shakespeare should be taught.

There are 105 specific items in the 'Summary of Principal Conclusions and Recommendations' which comprise Chapter X of the report. Recommendations are made for all types of school and the training of their teachers. Such things as examinations, the teaching of drama, books and libraries and the reading of the Bible are covered. The first two general recommendations set the tone for the rest:

> 1. That our national education needs to be perfected by being scientifically refounded as a universal, reasonable, and liberal process of development.
> 2. That for such an Education the only basis possible is English.[20]

Shakespeare is not mentioned at any time in the Conclusions and Recommendations section but nor are any other figures in English drama, literature or poetry save for a passing reference to pre-Chaucerian English in the section on Universities. There are however, some salient recommendations which will be seen to bear upon other parts of this chapter and this thesis.

In the section on elementary schools, recommendation number twelve says that 'If literature is to be enjoyed by the children, it must be entrusted to teachers with a love of it'.[21] It is here where the report begins to pose questions upon the training, motives and integrity of existing teachers and schools. This is further demonstrated in recommendation twenty-seven which states 'That throughout the Public Schools,

[20] *Ibid.* p. 348
[21] *Ibid.* p. 349.

English Literature should be regarded as entitled to a place in the regular school course, and not relegated to spare time.'[22] A substantial part of the conclusions and recommendations chapter is, unsurprisingly in view of the above, devoted to the training of teachers which by inference appears to have been of uneven quality and duration.

Although Shakespeare is not named in the recommendations, a section headed 'The Drama' provides evidence of notice taken of witnesses who had stressed how much easier children might assimilate Shakespeare if accent is placed upon dramatization of the texts; one example of this is given above. Recommendations numbered 97 to 99, state:

> 97. That the reading and the acting of plays should be encouraged in schools of all types and in [teacher] Training Colleges.
> 98. That Universities should seriously consider the possibility of granting a Diploma in Dramatic Art, similar to the Diploma in the Humanities to students who have followed an approved course
> 99. That lectureships on the Art of the Theatre, similar to that established at Liverpool, and also Chairs in Dramatic Literature might well be established at other Universities.[23]

Number ninety-seven actually codifies a practice which was probably common in some schools but perhaps non-existent in others. It stops short of saying 'must' instead of 'should', but gives support to those to whom the rote-learning of drama and poetry represented a block to the promotion and enjoyment of both. 'Seriously consider' in number ninety-eight and 'might well be' in ninety-nine, signify that the Universities, along with the training colleges should be in the vanguard of a revised attitude to drama by formalizing what had possibly become a variably neglected approach to the use of drama.

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[22] *Ibid.* p. 350.
[23] *Ibid.* p. 359.

The conclusion can be drawn that in order to initiate a new approach to literature and drama the committee placed the universities in the front line. Concentrating on those who were already part of the system and upon those who were about to graduate, would give impetus to the movement supporting the advancement of widely-taught literature. As Newbolt puts it in the introduction to the report, '…the teacher must exist before the pupil.'[24] This is another example of one of Newbolt's 'motherhood statements', phrased to accentuate where his committee would be looking foremost for support in the area of teacher recruitment and training.
The recommendations above were not implemented in the period, and not in fact for some fifty years. The implications for Shakespeare, the plays in particular, were therefore quite obvious: if performance was not accentuated as a legitimate and curriculum-based study, and drama was not promoted in accordance with recommendations numbered 98 and 99, then Shakespeare could not be expected to flourish.

The theme which pervades virtually all parts of the report and which is dominant in the introduction to it, is that of class. It could be inferred that class was also a major concern of the government which had ordered the Report and which expected an appropriate response and recommendations. The purposely wide terms of reference allowed Newbolt to identify these concerns overtly, as in the introduction where it says that:

> If there were any common fundamental idea of education, any great common division of the curriculum, which would stand out in such a way as to obliterate, or even to soften, the lines of separation between the young of different classes, we might hope to find more easily the way to bridge the social chasms which divide us.[25]

[24] *Ibid.* p. 25.
[25] *Ibid.* p. 6.

In pursuit of this 'bridge', a section of the report entitled 'Literature and the Nation' expresses the problem where, as it is suggested, a newly empowered bourgeoisie is getting in the way of harmony:

> Literature, in fact, seems to be classed by a large number of thinking working men with antimacassars, fish-knives and other unintelligible and futile trivialities of "middle-class culture", and, as a subject of instruction, is suspect as an attempt "to side-track the working-class movement".[26]

The use of quotation marks implies that this last comment was evidence from a witness and was seized upon to focus the reader onto the 'real' obstacle to unity: the burgeoning middle classes and their allegedly vulgar pretensions. Nowhere in the report is there any adverse criticism of the aristocracy or the working classes. The use of the word 'seems' in the first line of the quotation, followed by the expression 'thinking working men' suggests that Newbolt was trying to make an argument for the 'working-classes' based on their, and possibly his, distrust and suspicion of the middle classes which were, as will be seen, as the inter-war years passed, frequently seen by both the 'upper', or privileged, classes and the working classes, as an area of contempt. Developing this in the report, Newbolt, despairing of the alleged Philistinism of the middle classes, says:

> …we are unable to subscribe to the dictum that literature, as generally interpreted, is part of "middle-class culture". We sincerely wish it were. We find, on the contrary, an indifference among middle-class persons to the claims of literature, even more disheartening than the open hostility which we are told exists among certain circles of working-class opinion.[27]

[26] *Ibid.* p. 252.
[27] *Ibid.* p. 256.

This quotation contains much unwitting testimony to Newbolt's anxiety to play to the correct audience. The 'open hostility' of 'certain circles' of working class opinion is not seen as existing, but merely 'told' to exist, a nuance which might suggest that the committee might consider that it may not exist at all. Similarly, in the rush to condemn the middle classes, Newbolt apparently fails to recognize that he is one of them, as are the many teachers, lecturers, writers and critics who supplied much of the evidence to the committee, and who will be expected to implement its recommendations. It is easy to infer throughout the report that the committee, or at least the chairman as the final editor of it, was confused on the whole subject of class, and had failed to grasp the new social phenomena which were emerging.

Whatever the flaws within the Newbolt Report, it was the most important step yet taken by government to restructure the education system and to establish the English language as a dominant factor in the maintenance and advancement of *British* power, however diluted such power had become or was envisaged in the post-war years. Quite how Shakespeare was supposed to support the aims, open or otherwise, of the Newbolt Report, remains unclear. If the overt aim of the report was to place English into the foreground, then it might be seen by future legislators that Shakespeare would be a primary exemplar, given some of the comments by witnesses regarding the unsuitability of Shakespeare in early teaching - the 'unfamiliar tongue', or the alleged 'distrust' of it by the working classes. If the more covert, but perhaps prime aim of the report is to break down class barriers, then Shakespeare would presumably require careful analysis and selection of plays or excerpts, given the paucity of plays which advocate or promote the advancement of the lower orders, or the need for understanding and collusion of all members of 'society', a word of very little practical consequence in Shakespeare's day. It was a term which in the 1920s

was regarded with considerable suspicion, given its proximity to 'social' and 'socialism'. As Craig Hardin puts it:

> Shakespeare lived in a Pre-Cartesian world, that is, a world which had in it little uncertainty as to the nature of things, and little idea as to the importance of research.[28]

Hardin presumably, is taking the notion from Descartes' *Discourse on Method* in which he exposes and dismantles previously held ideas of ordinance and order.

Apart from those occasions in the report when Shakespeare was discussed as divisive or unsuitable, he was commended and recommended at regular intervals but only in the context of an audience already attuned to him. Shakespeare could not be moulded or adapted to a general purpose 'fit', a unifying and recognizable rallying-point for the whole of society. Writing specifically on the Newbolt Report, Kenneth O. Morgan discussed:

> …some kind of connection…that would unite the country behind a common cause…that would prevail upon the people a sense of urgency in terms of the way in which they saw their country's future.[29]

The problem with this observation is that Newbolt could hardly be expected to have an impact upon 'the people' very quickly. Whilst I have argued that the report advocated radical changes to the teaching of English, with precisely the same motives as expressed by Morgan, it was only via the six Hadow Reports (q.v.) that Newbolt's main recommendations could be promulgated. If by 'the people' Morgan really meant the whole population, then Newbolt's report would be insignificant in the short and most vital term, because of the many other pre-occupations which then obtained for the majority of the working-classes.

The risk that the Newbolt Report was viewed as an instant 'solution' as a patriotic weapon and a new approach to teaching, has often misled commentators into

[28] Craig Hardin, 'Trends of Shakespeare Scholarship', *Shakespeare Survey* 2 (1949), 107-114, p. 107.
[29] Kenneth O. Morgan, *The Oxford History of Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 63

failing to recognize the time necessary for it to cause changes in the system. Balz Engler does not fall into this category:

> It is not surprising that recent historical accounts of English studies in England have taken the Newbolt Report as a kind of founding moment. As they have often been conceived as polemical interventions in contemporary debate, they question both its social and its nationalist rhetoric, but are also locked into the framework set by it.[30]

The 'recent historical accounts' which Engler mentions were accounts written in the 1990s, a time when the effects of the Newbolt Report had been fully investigated and exhaustively reported. Newbolt's 'social and nationalist rhetoric' is undeniable but is now fully understood and recognized as vital at the time.

Modern writers have argued that there was in any case an inevitability about the future of the study of literature, and that Newbolt was merely a stopping point along the way. Chris Baldick, writing of the times, says that '…the promotion of English as a study [was] conducive to national pride and unity.'[31] He later goes on to identify three factors which:

> …ensured literary study, in particular of English Literature, a permanent place in higher education:
> 1. Specific needs of the Empire, especially the Indian Civil Service.
> 2. [Existing] Movements for adult education – Mechanics' Institutes Working Men's Colleges and extension lecturing.
> 3. Specific provision for women's education.[32]

If Baldick's comments were to be applied to Newbolt (which Baldick did not intend) it could be inferred that successive governments had failed to recognize that political

[30] Balz Engler, 'Englishness and English Studies', *European English Studies: Contributions towards the History of a Discipline.* Ed. by Balz Engler and Renate Haas (Leicester: The English Association for ESSE, 2000), 335-348 (p. 344).
[31] Chris Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 4.
[32] *Ibid.* p. 61.

and social changes were about to overwhelm the established order. In a later discussion on T.S. Eliot, Baldick makes the point that

> …the generation of students returning from the war, brought with them a suspicion of their elders which proved fertile ground for Eliot's new, unsentimental attitude to literature.[33]

Baldick's 'suspicion' might be extended to 'distrust', and it should also be considered that it was not only Eliot's attitude which was new but, as seen in the previous chapter, a new movement for the study of literature gained momentum throughout most of the period.

Parliament

The 1918 Education Act, known then more commonly as 'The Fisher Act', ordered, amongst other things, the raising of the school leaving age to fourteen years, with no exemptions. This was important legislation for a number of reasons affecting the promotion of English, English literature and ultimately, Shakespeare. The first reason is that the Act guaranteed, given a notionally steady birth-rate, a flow of educated teenagers into an environment dominated either by unemployment in the north of the country or accelerating social change in the south. This first reason triggered the second inasmuch as it was recognized by government that the education system now required a complete overhaul. By guaranteeing secondary education for all, the Act also created the probability that tertiary education would be in need of expansion. By far the biggest problem for the educationalists was the need to identify a curriculum which could cater for the needs of the country in respect of engineers and scientists, as well as in Humanities subjects.

[33] *Ibid*, p. 134.

The Newbolt committee was set up in 1918, briefed only to provide recommendations for the teaching of English at all levels. There had previously been *ad hoc* committees and working groups set up before and during the war to look at various aspects of education. It was clear that, after the Fisher Act, the final declaration of state-controlled education, a supra-national approach to education was necessary. This would ultimately end by 1938 with the Spens Report which, amongst other things, led to the confirmation of the three kinds of secondary school: the Grammar, the Technical and the Secondary Modern.

Sir Henry Hadow (1859-1937), was appointed by the Board of Education to chair a number of consultative committees which eventually produced six reports between 1923 and 1933. Although some of the reports are not relevant to this thesis, they are listed in order to demonstrate the wide scope of the investigations. Their content may be summarized:

1923 The Differentiation of the Curriculum.
1924 Psychological Tests of Educable Capacity.
1926 The Education of the Adolescent.
1928 Books in Elementary Schools.
1931 The Primary School.
1933 Infant and Nursery Schools.

The committees of between twenty and twenty-two people met over the years and reported on the above accordingly, these reports being known collectively as the 'Hadow Reports'. The 1923 report was concerned with decisions on the curriculum relating to the sex of the student. There were a number of factors which the Hadow working committee had to take into account although these were not acknowledged in this report or any of the other five. These factors centred upon the newly acquired position of women in society, particularly the enfranchisement, at this time, of women

over thirty years of age and the admittance of women to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The employment of women during the war, in addition to the two points above, placed the education of girls in the foreground because it would have been strategically and certainly politically unwise not to have recognized the changed position of women in society

The 1923 report shows a timetable of a municipal secondary school which provides an insight into the considerations of the ensuing report in 1926 concerning the education of the adolescent. It is seen that from the Second Form to the Lower Fifth, Needlework, Cookery and Laundry are reserved for girls; manual instruction for boys. By the time the boys and girls reach the Lower Fifth however, boys study Civics for one hour and twenty minutes per week, whilst girls alone complete forty minutes of singing. English Language and Literature are taught to both sexes, but it is noteworthy that they are put together as one item on the curriculum and, up to the Lower Fifth, they, combined, receive less time than French, Mathematics and Latin.[34]

It can be inferred from this that the timetable was not conducive to the expansion of the teaching of literature but rather concentrated upon the aim of equipping pupils for a working life. The 1926 report did however, possibly with some of the passages in mind, quoted above from the Newbolt Report, enjoin teachers to re-evaluate the teaching of literature:

> In order to inculcate and develop a love of literature in his (sic) pupils the teacher should treat it as a form of art in which life has been interpreted…At the same time, the grammatical side should not be neglected, and it devolves on the teacher that so far as possible every pupil in the class has thoroughly mastered the meaning of the passages which are being studied.[35]

[34] The Differentiation of the Curriculum, HMSO, 1923.
[35] Hadow Report, 'The Education of the Adolescent' (HMSO: 1926), pp. 192-193.

In say, six forty-minute periods of English Language and Literature a week, it might be considered a daunting task for an adolescent to master the meaning of passages of literature so thoroughly, but such a consideration does not take into account the teaching methods and disciplines of the times. It cannot be argued from quantifiable data whether or not the teaching methods of the 1920s and 1930s were more or less effective than those of today, The variation in the standards of schools, teachers, pupils and curricula, then and now militate against accurate comparison or assessment. Anecdotal evidence might suggest that highly disciplined rote learning may well have predominated, resulting in a thorough recall of say, a passage from a Shakespeare play, if not perhaps a great love of it. In all but the later Technical schools, Shakespeare featured in all the curricula of all the others.

Universities

In the pamphlet for the English Association, 'The Teaching of English at the Universities', Sir Stanley Leathes opens, saying:

> There are now in this United Kingdom and in other English-speaking countries a great number of Professors of the English Language and of English Literature. Not so very long ago there were none. Yet the art of writing English has been practised with some trifling success for many generations before the first Professor appeared.[36]

His point here is not to denigrate the new Professors of English but to draw attention to the fact that English was about to become a fully installed subject at the Universities. Leathes was not a member of the Newbolt committee but was a prime witness to it, a point which again accentuates the role of the English Association in the movement to promote the study of the language. His concerns were mainly with

[36] Stanley Leathes, 'The Teaching of English at the Universities', (Leicester: The English Association, 1918), Pamphlet No. 26, p. 3.

examinations in English Literature, particularly in the Civil Service, but also in the Universities. Leathes was adamantly against examinations in literature, saying at one point in his pamphlet:

> Examination, like mines and manufacture, is necessary; but to examine English literature is like opening a coal mine in the Lake District, Why is examination necessary? Examination is a form of *peine forte et dure* to compel the recalcitrant to plead. Why not settle the matter out of court?[37]

Leathes betrays here and elsewhere in his pamphlet, his membership of a kind of 'old guard', a cadre of scholars, civil servants and teachers who, in the post-war era of Newbolt, state intervention, educational restructuralism and strict curriculum, could refer to a time when Literature was the preserve of the gentleman and the gentleman student, and Universities were few in number and a preserve of the privileged.

The university system after the war presented, depending upon one's cultural, social and political background and stance, either an opportunity or a threat to the promotion of English. The influence in England of Oxford and Cambridge was palpable and was recognized by the Newbolt committee. Discussing the perceived 'problem' with the older universities the report says:

> …it is not too much to say that until quite lately, English had no position at all at the Universities…If any graduate or undergraduate studied Chaucer or Shakespeare or Milton, or the language in which they wrote, he did it of his own motion, and not as part of any recognized course included in the studies of a University…It is easy to explain how this came about. The Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge were almost all founded either in the Middle Ages or at the time of the Renaissance. It took the older ones time to shake off the idolatry of mediaeval logic and philosophy.[38]

This can be taken to mean that the older universities and their traditions might not be trusted to lead in the matter of the teaching of English; after all, a similar distrust of tradition was now manifest in many other spheres, as discussed at various stages in this thesis. On the other hand, the report, in the light of recent changes of attitude to

[37] *Ibid.* pp. 12-13
[38] *The Teaching of English in England* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1921), p. 197.

the teaching of English at Oxford and Cambridge could be taken to be welcoming of these changes *especially* because of the rejection of tradition which might be expected by those universities with so much of it. Greater state control of education could not force the ancient universities towards a particular direction, indeed, as Reba Sofer points out:

> …when the University Grants Commission was created, and consistent Government funding introduced after World War I, the freedom of the Universities [of Oxford and Cambridge] was scrupulously preserved.[39]

Oxford and Cambridge universities were not reactionary in their approach to drama in education, and were actually taking a lead in this area some time before the war. A break with tradition was noted by Newbolt:

> The activities of the dramatic societies at Oxford and Cambridge are so well known…The University authorities have abandoned the attitude of their Elizabethan predecessors, and have sanctioned the performance not only of classical but of Shakespeare plays, and others written for the modern stage. The example of Oxford and Cambridge has been followed by the newer Universities and Colleges in London and throughout the country.[40]

It could be inferred from this that Oxford and Cambridge Universities had encouraged, or even inspired the placing of drama into the foreground of teaching and the enhancement of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, which was offered scholarships by the London County Council. At the time of writing the Newbolt Report, the Central School of Speech Training was also seeking university recognition via affiliation to the University of London. Shortly after the war, the University of Liverpool appointed Harley Granville Barker to a lectureship on the Art of Theatre.

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[39] Reba N. Sofer, *Discipline and Power: The University, History, and the Making of an English Elite, 1870-1930* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994), p. 20.
[40] *The Teaching of English in England* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1921), p. 322.

Thereafter, most of the Victorian and twentieth-century civic universities followed suit over the two decades, creating chairs of dramatic literature.

The challenge to the ancient universities centred on their ability to change in the face of all of the other changes noted already in society, politics and technology, but most of all in the teaching of literature and specifically, of Shakespeare. Oxford and Cambridge could claim various initiatives in the matter of innovation. Henry Birkenhead for example, had founded a Chair of Poetry at Oxford as long before as 1708, but the poetry was from classics texts and was always, *de rigeur,* delivered in Latin. It was not until the seventh Professor, Thomas Warton the younger, in the Chair from 1757 to 1767, that English poetry was formally acknowledged. The tradition continued via such as John Keble to Matthew Arnold, under whose chairmanship the rules on Latin were relaxed. Although such enlightenment was beginning to permeate the universities, it took a second University Commission in 1877, the first being in 1850, to promote the study of English at Oxford and Cambridge, eventually founding the Merton Professorship of English Language and Literature in 1885. At Cambridge, a Lectureship in English was founded in 1896, followed by the King Edward VII Chair of English Literature in 1911.

The foregoing is presented to illustrate the difficult cultural climate which must have existed regarding Shakespeare studies. Although it remains unexpressed, in spite of close investigation, it seems that Shakespeare, seen primarily as a playwright rather than a poet, was marginalized to some extent even though his plays featured prominently in the social *milieu.* There is an argument also that the bardolatry of the Victorian and Edwardian times militated against his inclusion in an academic society which eschewed the mass in favour of the elite, perhaps an understandable attitude as the masses began to achieve more voice as the Victorian era closed.

By the 1920s, via a combination of war, the English Association, the Newbolt Report, Hadow and the emergence of new universities untouched by ancient tradition, Shakespeare became a fixed study in schools and universities. Whether or not Shakespeare was considered 'relevant' to the new era of mass consumption and communication, the move to promote English and Englishness could hardly exclude a playwright who was so well known and widely read and performed. Because of the inclusion of Shakespeare at schools and universities there now existed an opportunity for editors, academics and publishers to compete not only for time on the curricula but for a general readership of those who would emerge from their education with an enthusiasm for Shakespeare. There was of course the unquantifiable many who, having had Shakespeare forced upon them, would perhaps never again have anything to do with him.

Editions

An insight into some new attitudes to Shakespeare can be found in the General Introduction to the first of the New Shakespeare editions in *The Tempest*, when Sir Arthur Quiller- Couch and John Dover Wilson say,

> …we enter upon our task diffidently, with a sense of high adventure, tempered by a consciousness of our grave responsibility…we have designed these volumes also for the pocket of the ordinary lover of Shakespeare, because time alters the catholic approach to him, if by sensible degrees, no less thoroughly than it deflects that of the esoteric student…the mischief is not only that Shakespeare becomes a sort of national idol against whom a man can offer no criticism save timidly…we hope indeed that our text will make him more intelligible theatrically.[41]

In view of the fact that both Quiller-Couch and Wilson were members of the Newbolt Committee, such a statement might be expected. There was after all, a recurring

[41] William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* ed. by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and J. Dover Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921) pp. vii, viii, xvi, xxiv.

theme in their report that the demystification of Shakespeare and the broadening of his reader base was something which had emerged as a *sine qua non* for his promotion, understanding and appreciation, which in turn might assist in the erosion of class divisions.

As a mission statement, the joint editors were apparently seeking to achieve those multiple objectives in the light of the new post-war urgency to demonstrate in some quarters, a socially democratic approach to a subject which tradition had cloaked in a sombre, serious and intellectually daunting protective covering. On the other hand, the statements could be seen as patronising and a little sycophantic toward the 'ordinary lover of Shakespeare' who was now to have the subject explained to him in the simplest of terms by those who professed to understand it. When Quiller-Couch and Dover Wilson say that the volumes are 'also' for 'ordinary' lovers of Shakespeare it implies that both ends of the new market, the student and scholar on the one hand, the 'man on the Clapham omnibus' on the other, can be accommodated.

If the Cambridge Shakespeare stayed consistently in line with the original mission statement, it was likely to achieve its intended market objectives between 1921 and 1966 when the thirty-ninth volume *Poems* was published. Quiller-Couch, who left the project in 1925, whilst not an experienced scholarly editor was, according to Andrew Murphy:

> …an enthusiast who had first been introduced to the playwright by being clattered on the head by a volume of one of Knight's popular editions.[42]

It might therefore be unfair to accuse him of being patronizing in the light of his enthusiasm in lieu of his professional expertise. Pondering why *The Tempest* was chosen as the first volume in the edition, Murphy quotes a letter from Quiller-Couch

[42] Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 229.

to Dover Wilson dated July 1919 in which he justifies the choice by saying, 'I know a little about ships.'[43] Although Dover Wilson continued to edit the edition on his own after Quiller-Couch had retired from it because of failing eyesight, it could be that the loss of such a man was regrettable in view of his appealing attitude, not lost on Dover Wilson, whose own attitude to editing echoed much of Quiller-Couch's humour and enthusiasm.

Murphy implies that it appeared that the New Shakespeare caught those involved in the publication of the Oxford edition somewhat off balance at a time when the traditional and the conforming in the arts and sciences were in a state of continuous change. Inferring from Murphy, it seems that editors and publishers, lacking the availability of reliable marketing techniques, could not decide the market for their new edition other than by instinct and tradition, or custom and practice. Unlike the Cambridge editions of Dover Wilson and Quiller-Couch, Oxford appear to have been seeking, certainly since 1904, a kind of textual purity. Even after the hiatus of the war and the appearance in 1921 of the New Cambridge, the aim of Oxford was to continue with these aims throughout the period, with no final resolution, although the Clarendon Press embarked upon a new edition in 1938. Murphy, discussing the marketing of the Clarendon, demonstrates the scholars' dilemma by quoting a letter of 3 January 1935 from W.W. Greg to Kenneth Sisam in which the market for the edition is defined by Greg:

> You must not aim at two things at once. If the Clarendon Press publishes a (textual) critical edition, it ought to remain the standard for a long time to come. And I think you have got the right man [McKerrow] to do it. But it is no use trying to get him to make a *popular* edition and I think it would be a mistake to aim at that. It will only be of real interest to the reader interested in the criticism of *text*, and such a reader doesn't want pap.[44]

[43] *Ibid* p. 231.
[44] *Ibid.* p. 225.

There are a number of points here which tell us much about the workings of the Clarendon Press compared to the Cambridge and thereby also inform the matter of the marketing of Shakespeare. The latter's edition was under way very quickly, whereas the Clarendon took decades to begin publication. As a respected scholar, Greg identified the market as comprising the scholar and academic rather than the school or the general reader. The Clarendon was targeted to be an edition which would stand the test of academic time, eschewing the Cambridge's appeal to the 'popular' audience, which was held in apparent disdain by Greg and, by association, McKerrow.

Greg's view however, when regarded from a pragmatic perspective, is understandable. If Quiller-Couch and Dover Wilson had chosen one marketing strategy, Greg, McKerrow, Pollard and others obviously saw little point in duplicating it when another market existed untapped, at least in modern times. It is unclear what Greg means by 'pap', but his remark reflects a common view amongst academics of the trends in popular literature, newspaper and magazines. In this case, Greg was probably referring to the editorial style of the popular editions, where close reading and rigorous textual analysis was not considered by the editors to be essential or desirable.

One market for Shakespeare which was well covered in the period was that of the junior and early secondary schools, with Henry Newbolt's and Richard Wilson's *Teaching of English* series which started in 1925. The *Macbeth* of this edition was repackaged as *Nelson's Sixpenny Shakespeare.* [45] The editors did not compromise their aims of bringing Shakespeare to young people in a readily understood and recognizable package. The text is interspersed with drawings of castles, armour and the supposed ladies' dresses of the day. The readers are invited to imagine where, in

[45] *Ibid.* p. 373.

the highly improbable looking castle, the scenes took place; where Duncan was murdered, the location of the banquet, where Lady Macbeth walked etc.[46] The footnotes in this edition were clear and uncomplicated, designed chiefly to explain the modern names of older ones but without references to earlier texts or discussing the arcane and profound aspects of it which might perplex the general reader. The *Teaching of English* edition was a direct result of the Newbolt Report recommendations which, on various occasions referred to the need for simplicity and to the need to avoid dullness when introducing young pupils to Shakespeare.

The cheap, paper-covered edition in the *Teaching of English* ran to nineteen volumes from 1925 to 1947; their aim being to appeal to the young or simply the enthusiastic, demonstrated by the choices of plays. The plays selected correspond to those most often performed during the fifteen years between the first volume and the onset of World War II, as shown in the following chapter on performance. *Henry VI* is excluded, as are most of the plays which a new or younger reader might find difficult or for whom they may have been deemed unsuitable. *Titus Andronicus, Measure for Measure, Troilus and Cressida, The Taming of the Shrew, All's Well that Ends Well* are examples where violence or sexual context were considered unacceptable.

The promotion of English as a discrete study in parallel with a restructured education system, reflected and addressed post-war attitudes and concerns, and that Shakespeare was a beneficiary of these new approaches in that his works could be promoted with equal effect to all literate sectors of the community. What might be called the 'formalisation and bureaucratisation' of English, education and the study of Shakespeare, could equally, alienate various sectors. In the 1920s and 1930s, Shakespeare, because of its inclusion in so many of the curricula, might be seen as a

[46] William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* ed. by Evelyn Smith (London and Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1925)

chore, an examination to be passed, rather than an enjoyment. The previous chapter discussed new criticism and reading which could have alienated many potential enthusiasts, or these methods may have questioned the relevance of Shakespeare in a new technological age: were fairies, ghosts and Tudor monarchs an appropriate area of study in the new modern and forward-looking age? Were there not now many new authors and playwrights whose English was the English of post-war Britain, an English newly emerging as a favoured study? In parallel with the social, political changes which were enacted throughout the period, the environment for education, the study of English and the study of Shakespeare changed drastically in the years following the war. Tradition was no longer the reference point it once was; not only was it distrusted by much of the public but it was now *shown* to be distrusted by academics, scholars, statesmen and politicians to such an extent that change became the norm rather than the exception. Whilst there may have been a hidden agenda in the Newbolt Report to reinforce 'Englishness' by encouraging people to think of the English language as new rallying point, its promotion may really have merely encouraged these same people to re-examine their cultural environment.

The various interpretations of Shakespeare were discussed in the previous chapter in the context of written English and written Shakespeare. This will be considered in the next chapter in the context of performance where, in its increasingly varied forms during the period, many of the recommendations of the Newbolt Report were either wittingly or unwittingly pursued. Although this current chapter might suggest that a positive realignment of attitudes to Shakespeare took place as a result of the initiatives discussed above, the new technologies discussed in chapter one, added

to the restlessness and changing attitudes of the new critics to poetry and literature were to lead Shakespeare into uncharted areas.

CHAPTER FOUR

Performance

The new entertainment media of radio and talking pictures which were to emerge in 1922 and 1929 respectively, proved both an opportunity and a threat to Shakespeare in performance. Coincidentally, the tradition of Shakespeare on stage was both a strength and a weakness. Previous chapters have shown that the political, commercial, economic, technological and social changes over the twenty-year period had a profound effect upon the minor and mass cultures which developed after the end of World War I and which continued to evolve throughout the two decades. This chapter will show that the fortunes of Shakespeare in performance flourished on stage when championed by enthusiasts or celebrities but declined when new commercial imperatives or new competition emerged to challenge older styles and traditions. It will also show that Shakespeare on film and radio did not fulfil the expectations of those who were the early champions of those media.

One of the more obvious principles of marketing is that the creation of entirely new markets will affect existing ones, given the finite time and disposable income of the consumer. The novelties of cinema and radio were not however, the only new influences on the increasingly financially-empowered middle and working classes. As the period progressed, more people enjoyed paid holidays, bought motor cars and household goods, played or attended sports, and generally experienced greater choices and freedoms. Performance therefore in any form, became a matter of marketing and selling in an environment where these two measures became increasingly necessary and sophisticated. The marketing and selling of the Shakespeare ‘brand’ might therefore at first be seen as a simple exercise, given the ‘product’ history and recognition, but as will be shown, the traditions and the notions of Shakespeare, along

with other long-held traditions and notions, became irrelevant or subject to modification and adaptation as the period progressed. This chapter will examine stage, radio and film performance of Shakespeare and will discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the period.

The Stage

In a letter to the Writers' Union of the USSR on May 31 1939, Sean O'Casey said:

> One theatre in London – called the Old Vic – gives performances of Shakespeare's plays constantly. Some of these are done well, and many of them are done badly. The people who keep the commercial theatre going give it the miss – don't give a damn about it; and the theatre is always in a bad way financially. The bare truth is that Shakespeare is not wept nor sung nor honoured in his own country. As for the workers, it may be said that they never come into touch with Shakespeare from the cradle to the grave.[1]

The first two sentences of this quote are unarguable. The third is partially correct in that the theatre was indeed 'in a bad way financially' for nearly all of the inter-war years. Whether 'the people who keep the commercial theatre going', whoever is meant, may actually have cared, is a matter of surmise, but O'Casey seems to have missed the point of the Old Vic as it was envisaged by Lilian Bayliss, as a theatre which specifically catered for 'the workers' . The last two sentences are simply inaccurate and were probably included to give the Writers' Union of the USSR some reassurance of the imagined plight of the decadent West. The Old Vic is discussed later in this chapter but this quote is included to illustrate a tendency which will be seen elsewhere, for literary and arts figures to misunderstand the compelling forces of

[1] David Krause, ed., *The Letters of Sean O'Casey* (London: Cassell, 1975), p. 801.

the age and to make extravagant statements, particularly about Shakespeare, but also on symbolic institutions and practices which were considered fashionable in those times of change and reassessment. O'Casey may have had a point in that the status and critical reception of Shakespeare changed in the period, but it will be shown that Shakespeare flourished, albeit restrictedly, in times when the stage presented a variety, spectacle and diversification not previously experienced.

Although illustrative references and statistics concerning certain provincial theatres such as the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre and the Birmingham Repertory Theatre will be used, this chapter mainly concerns the theatres of London as listed at Schedule 1. The main reason for this choice is that in 1930, one fifth of the population of Britain lived within fifteen miles of the centre of London, thus providing a substantial base sample covering an area of demographic conformity. Previous chapters have shown that England was not a homogeneous entity during the period: the levels of income, unemployment and health varying considerably between the north-west and the south-east. Whilst it may be argued that these variables also apply today, it cannot be argued that they approximate those of the breadth of the period. These and other factors combine to make any kind of national assessment meaningless and invalid. London and the Home Counties provide a stable reference over a substantial population sample, and also, crucially, a wider variety of theatre, from large to small, city centre to suburban, subsidized to independent, and traditional to innovative.

The growth of the public transport system in London between 1919 and 1939 made the theatres of the West End increasingly convenient to visit from the outer edges of the conurbation. This urban tourism provided the marketeers and the salesmen within the burgeoning entertainment industry with opportunities previously

denied to them. The productions of the plays of Shakespeare on the London stage were however, kept largely aloof from the concept of market forces and from the perceived requirements of changing fashions and moods. Writing in the *Morning Post* of 1919, George E. Morrison said:

> To millions who rarely or never visited the theatre before, the war has made it a solace almost as familiar as their newspaper or their pipe. In becoming a nation of warriors we may also have become a nation of theatre-goers. Even if this be not so it is high time that the theatre was taken in hand. Nor has the public reason to be satisfied with the entertainment set before an audience. The war has not brought the theatre that quickening spirit some foretold. Our managers have not risen to the occasion, rather may some of them be said to have stooped to the opportunity.[2]

Morrison is unable to resist hyperbole in an attempt to make his case but clearly resents the alleged opportunism of the 'managers' who because of a newly mobile population during the war, had seen new opportunities to put 'popular' entertainment first, at the expense of the cerebral. The exigencies of wartime Britain, not experienced at any point previously in modern times, had engendered a culture of opportunism, either financial or in terms of self-gratification, at all levels of society. Music Hall and light musical revue had become a favourite for audiences which had experienced rationing, domestic discomfort and regular news of heavy military casualties, and which were more susceptible to productions which provided relaxation rather than stimulation. It remained unclear where and how Shakespeare could be fitted into the new environment.

William Poel (1852-1934), actor, theatrical manager and dramatist, was recognised at the time for his own special style of Shakespeare productions. His contempt for the commercial theatre of the entrepreneur, the impresario and the accountant, grew as the period progressed, and he warned of the emerging trend:

[2] G.E. Morrison, 'Reconstruction of the Theatre', *Morning Post*, 3 February 1919, p. 13.

> Of all the follies committed by the English Government of 1914, none was worse than the neglect to check the efforts of the English Theatrical Trust to dominate the whole financial interests of the theatre. And none was of more far-reaching consequences as to the effect on the mind and spirit of the English people. It was equal to making financiers speculators and profiteers the sole guardians of theatrical expression particularly in London.[3]

Poel resorts to exaggeration and betrays his conservatism but it seems that he was condemning what he saw as a rush towards commercialism. Poel was a leading influence on the staging and design of Shakespeare but was intransigent in his opposition to the new dictates of the marketing of theatre in London. The term 'market forces' was not in common use in the 1920s; had it been it would most likely have meant little to those to whom the theatre was not seen as an investment opportunity but as an artistic tradition and a cultural legacy.

The government had made a possibly unwitting gesture towards a resistance to market forces in 1916 when it introduced the Finance (New Duties) Act. One of the provisions of this act contained in Section 1 (5) (b) concerned a reduction of tax on the price of seats in the theatre, provided 'that the entertainment is of a wholly educational character'. The lowest priced seats were to be free of tax, with a graduated scale of taxation throughout the price range. The London County Council also provided a subsidy to the Old Vic. As Shakespeare was included in the curricula of secondary schools in London, the notion of 'wholly educational character' fitted easily into the calculations but had only a marginal effect upon audience levels and performance runs. Besides, not everyone agreed upon the automatic inclusion of Shakespeare under the Act: a *Daily Express* headline of 4 November 1921 read, 'Theatre Not Educational – Lord Chief Justice', with a sub-heading, 'Astonishing Comment on Shakespeare'. The article concerns the upholding of a Government

[3] William Poel, *What is Wrong with the Theatre?* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1920), p. 17.

auditor's surcharge of £2745 upon the London County Council which paid for performances of Shakespeare for children.[4]

Even where central government and local authorities were keen to promote their enthusiasm for 'educational' Shakespeare, there was the recognition that subsidy was not the solution to any of the perceived ills of classical theatre. Under a headline 'Shakespeare for School Children' in *The Times* newspaper of July 4 1921, a discussion on the L.C.C. grant reported Ben Greet, producer, as saying:

> … the four years in which Shakespeare's plays had been produced at the Old Vic they had had an average of 1000 children at each matinée. He had not made a penny profit by the performances and the actors who had helped him had worked for very moderate salaries.[5]

Bearing upon this also is a reported comment by A.F. Clements, Chairman of the London Central Shakespeare Committee who, in a letter to the press said:

> Last season, Mr. Ben Greet's excellent company gave sixteen plays from October, 1919 to April, 1920, and they were witnessed by 20000 children.[6]

Shakespeare, Relevance and Fashion

Earlier chapters have illustrated political, social and cultural changes in the period following the war. As the emerging philosophies of modernist movements shaped the new literary and academic attitudes towards deconstruction, revisionism and disintegration in the study and criticism of Shakespeare, the stage was also the subject of experiment and revision. In much the same way as the Georgian poets, the Pre-Raphaelite painters, the Victorian novelists and the Romantic composers were marginalised by the new poets, painters, writers and composers of the twentieth century, so the styles and customs which had dominated productions of Shakespeare

[4] *The Daily Express,* 4 November 1921, p. 3.
[5] *The Times,* 4 July 1921, p. 3.
[6] *The Daily Express,* 16 March 1921, p. 7.

were rejected by those who saw in them a decadence and a deviation from what they considered a faithful method of delivery. The difference between those who would revise the presentation of Shakespeare and those who sought to construct entirely new concepts in the arts was the fact that the revisionists of theatre found their ideals in the past rather than in innovation. Although it will be shown that experimental Shakespeare played some part in the renewal of interest in his plays, the main thrust of the producers and directors in the period lay in the rediscovery of Elizabethan drama with its inherent simplicity and clarity.

Writing in 1922, Harley Granville Barker said:

> Our so-called Shakespearean traditions of today, it must be remembered, date, the most venerable of them, from no earlier than the eighteenth century, an age of some great actors, of much well-polished playing, but, if we may judge by its treatment of the texts, a complete misunderstanding of Elizabethan drama.[7]

It was not as if a revision of custom and practice in the theatre had not occurred before. In 1881 William Poel had produced *Hamlet* at St. George's Hall, London, using the text from the First Quarto. He used no scenery, and insisted on brisker speech from the actors, a practice then out of fashion. In 1895 he founded the Elizabethan Stage Society with the objective of promoting these ideas, and went on to produce the works of Shakespeare, Marlowe and their contemporaries. By 1920 Poel was sixty-eight years of age and was still propounding his ideas to an attentive group of directors and producers. So it was, in the 1920s there began a disintegration in the theatre regarding the presentation and verse-speaking of Renaissance drama. This disintegration was to cause confusion within the theatre-going public and a reluctance by theatrical entrepreneurs to take financial risks on what might have been seen as an uncertain product.

[7] Harley Granville Barker, *The Exemplary Theatre* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1922), p. 278.

The first faction in the *milieu* could be called the 'Poelist Elizabethans', those who would return to a more fundamental Shakespeare. Their aims were clear: the theatre was to be uncluttered by scenery (the changing of which sometimes took twenty minutes), verse was to be delivered at a normal rate of speaking rather than the laboured and accentuated manner favoured by the actor-managers of the previous century and the actor-knights of the present one, and the texts were to be preserved in full:

> [Herbert Beerbohm] Tree was adept at inventing ingenious and unnecessary business. In some of his revivals. I calculated that the cuts amounted to about a third of the play. Yet the long waits, the over-elaborate business and the languid manner in which he himself sometimes played, effectually deprived us of any appetite for more.[8]

On the face of it, it might appear both logical and attractive to return Shakespeare to a 'natural' state where concentration on the text is all and distractions few. The zeal with which Poel pursued this ideal was expressed in one of his letters in 1918:

> The London stage still needs a producer who will have the courage to give up setting Shakespeare's plays as if they were written on the plan of eighteenth-century Italian Opera, or, in other words who will dare give up the scenery, the costumes, and the properties which disfigured the opera stage in the time of Handel, and which are hopelessly out of place in any form of entertainment except Christmas pantomime.[9]

The problem with this view is that however attractive it might be to the Shakespeare actor and scholar, it ignored the commercial climate of the years following the war and it also ignored the current demographics. An example of this might be to take say, a theatre-goer who was aged forty in 1930, and estimate how he/she might have seen a Poelist-style production. As Shakespeare enthusiasts, and having been schooled in Victorian and Edwardian England, he or she would have seen the traditional

[8] Gordon Crosse, *Fifty Years of Shakespeare Playgoing* (London: A.R. Mowbray and Co. Ltd., 1941), p. 45.
[9] William Poel, *Monthly Letters* (London: T. Warner Laurie Ltd., 1929), p. 86.

Shakespeare described above as quite normal. How 'relevant' or 'real' such a performance would appear to these people must be considered in a new era when not only new plays were mainly concerned with the realities of the day. It might also have occurred to the theatrical producers to consider how relevant, in the rapidly changing society of the inter-war years, were Shakespeare's ghosts, fairies, cross-dressing, improbable twins and villainous or inept monarchs.

The headline 'Shakespeare is Dead', sub-headed, 'Mr. Oscar Asche's Verdict' reports him as saying in 1923 that:

> People want something modern like *Cairo.* My own productions of *Julius Caesar* cost £2000 per week and they didn't pay. Shakespeare is rammed down boys [sic] throats at school and they grow to dislike him and will not go to see his plays.[10]

The accuracy of Asche's comments may be questionable, but he reflects a more general view, as did Sybil Thorndike later in the same year when under a heading 'Shakespeare Fails in the West End', she is quoted as saying, after *Cymbeline* had been prematurely withdrawn from the New Theatre, that:

> I am through with elaborate productions of Shakespeare. This experience has taught me that there is not a sufficient public in the West End to give a production of Shakespeare any length of run.[11]

Both of these quotations might best be read be in the context of two possibly embittered but established people of the theatre, in despair of a phenomenon with which they were unaccustomed. Schedule 2 however, shows that whilst Shakespeare was out-run by new plays, a presence in the West End, with some successful productions, continued throughout the period. This demonstrated that Shakespeare could maintain a presence there but only via excellence in production and marketing and an increased necessity to employ well-known actors.

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[10] *Daily Express*, 15 May 1923, p. 5.
[11] *Sunday Express*, 30 September 1923, p. 6.

Newly written plays in the West End tended to be successful (See Schedule 4). Most of these plays delivered performance runs far in excess of any Shakespeare production in the twenty-year period. The following should be compared to Shakespeare productions listed in the schedule: Noel Coward's *The Vortex* in 1924 played 244 performances, its popularity forcing a move from the Everyman Theatre to the Comedy and thence to the Little Theatre. Coward's *London Calling* ran for 308 performances, whilst in 1929 *Bitter Sweet* ran for 728. Shaw's *St. Joan* premiered in 1924 was followed by 244 performances at the New Theatre, and appeared again in 1925, 1926, 1931, 1934 and 1939. Shaw's other successes included *Pygmalion, Heartbreak House, Caesar and Cleopatra, Mrs. Warren's Profession* and *Man and Superman.* Robert Cedric Sherriff's *Journey's End* was performed 593 times between 23 June 1929 and 6 June 1930 and was, with its pronounced anti-war theme, an example of the relevance of a new play. John Galsworthy's *The Skin Game* in 1920, *Loyalties* in 1922 and *Escape* in 1926 were no less relevant. J.B. Priestley's sixteen productions in the 1930s, of which fifteen were new plays, dominated the decade in terms of consistency of quality and audience reception, with such productions as *The Good Companions, Dangerous Corner, Laburnam Grove, Time and the Conways* and *Johnson over Jordan.* The playwright whose works were prolifically performed, second only to those of Shaw, was James Matthew Barrie with *Mary Rose,* 399 performances in 1920, *Quality Street,* 324 in 1921, and *Dear Brutus,* 257 in 1922.

The success of the West End stage in the period was mirrored by a decline of the actor-manager and his productions of Shakespeare and might be attributed to three causes. The first of these was rising costs, particularly rents, which increased exponentially as pressures on property caused by rapid population and income growth, were imposed throughout London. Nigel Playfair reported that:

> …the theatre boom had reacted on rents, and theatres, which before the war could be had for £40 a week, were costing three or four hundred, and difficult to find at that.[12]

The wages of actors and theatre staff rose as they gained a new independence, supported by trades unions. The second cause was the expansion of theatre-owning groups such as Moss Empires and Howard and Wyndham. The third was the appointment of entrepreneurs whose primary concerns were commercial rather than artistic, but whose presence at that time was seen as vital to the success of a production at a time of new markets.

Moss Empires, controlled by Harry M. Tennent, was largely responsible for music hall rather than 'legitimate' theatre. The tradition of music hall had enjoyed a revival during the war, but as the post-war period progressed the potential of the theatre play as a sound return on capital was realized, especially with so many new writers, a proliferation which created a 'buyer's market'. A notable exploiter of this market was Hugh Beaumont who having spent four years at Moss Empires as Tennent's assistant, was appointed to Howard and Wyndham's with a brief to reorganize the company and make it second only to Moss Empires, which was the biggest theatre-owning, play-presenting and touring management in Britain.

Beaumont did not write an autobiography, but one of his biographers, Richard Huggett, saw him as a practical entrepreneur, knowledgeable in matters of the commercial theatre and aware of the growing fiscal importance of the middle-brow, middle-class market which demanded easy entertainment in the theatre. Huggett's book is titled *Binkie Beaumont: Eminence Grise of the West End Theatre;* at one point Huggett says that 'Binkie wasn't interested in the classics which could be safely left

[12] Nigel Playfair, *The Story of the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1925), p. 7.

to that crazy old woman at the Old Vic.'[13] Whether Beaumont actually called Lilian Bayliss a 'crazy old woman' is questionable, but it is clear from the schedules which list the long-running new plays, that Huggett's chief contention about the West End was accurate, though only up to a point:

> Shakespeare was not popular in the commercial theatre…[he] became unfashionable for the first time in 300 years and was banished to the provinces, the schools and a converted Temperance hall in the Waterloo Road where Lilian Bayliss tried, with only partial success, to sell him to her local costermongers and charladies.[14]

Huggett can be challenged on a number of points. It can be seen that when *Hamlet* transferred from the Old Vic to the Queen's Theatre in 1930, with John Gielgud in the title role, it was successful by any criterion although it was noted that 'the cheap seats were full but the stalls were empty.'[15] There is testimony here to the trends which continued throughout the 1930s, that the 'star' system was beginning to take effect and that there may have been a regular audience for Shakespeare in the West End had the impresarios only ventured more. Schedule 4 shows that plays which started at the Old Vic, occasionally transferred to West End theatres with limited success in terms of performance run. Huggett's statement that 'Shakespeare was not popular in the commercial theatre' is not entirely correct, but Beaumont's astute commercial policy did prevail. It seems that he knew his target market and how to satisfy it. Most observations of audiences in London theatres at this time were largely anecdotal and subjective but the composition of audiences may be inferred from a view of the two peripheral theatres: The Old Vic and, from 1933, the Open Air Theatre in Regent's

[13] Richard Huggett, *Binkie Beaumont: Eminence Grise of the West End Theatre* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1989), p. 99.
[14] *Ibid.* p. 127.
[15] Tony Howard, 'Blood on the Bright Young Things: Shakespeare in the 1930s' in *British Theatre between the Wars 1918-1939* ed. by Clive Barker and Maggie B. Gale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 136.

Park. The Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith was the third peripheral theatre where Shakespeare thrived, if only briefly.

The Old Vic.

The Old Vic, Lambeth, as Huggett says, a converted Temperance Hall, was not considered to be a West End theatre either geographically or by adoption. It was an inconvenient bus, taxi or pedestrian journey from the centre of the City of Westminster, and from all but one of the mainline railway stations. However inconvenient the journey or unfashionable the area, the theatre remained throughout the period a venue for enthusiastic Shakespeare audiences. In the 1920s it was the first professional theatre in the world to produce all of the plays in the First Folio. The enthusiasm however, has to be qualified. E. Harcourt Williams, producer at the Old Vic from 1929 to 1933 says, 'Plays had to be decided upon, actors found and L.C.C. school plays fitted in.'[16] It may be concluded from this that actors were in short supply, probably because more profitable work could be obtained in the West End. The fact that school plays had to be 'fitted in', given the *Times* quotation of Ben Greet above regarding the lack of profits, suggests that times had not changed substantially from 1919 to 1933.

Dependence upon populating an auditorium with children is a strategy with much risk, but Bayliss and her producers over the years until her death in 1937, remained loyal to the concept of educational entertainment. Many of the emerging bourgeoisie however might possibly have considered the strategy, added to the inconvenience of travel, a disincentive to attend. They may also have been disincentivised by the adult sector of the audiences. Tyrone Guthrie, later to become a

[16] E. Harcourt Williams, *Four Years at the Old Vic 1929-1933* (London: Putnam, 1935), p. 4.

director of the Old Vic company, writing of the audiences from 1914 to 1924 said, '…for the most part the audience consisted of serious and predominantly working people from all over London.'[17] Harcourt Williams also provides a hint of the audience constituency by drawing attention to a note in a programme of 1930:

> The audience will greatly assist the atmosphere of the play if they will kindly remain silent after the lowering of the lights and refrain from striking matches during the progress of the scenes.[18]

The Old Vic was an inconvenient and unprofitable outpost with a specifically targeted audience which consisted mainly of working-class Shakespeare enthusiasts and children and, as Audrey Williamson adds, 'hardly touching the fringe of the West End theatre-goers and the great general public'[19] The theatre had a capacity of around 1000 at the time of Tyrone Guthrie, who was pleased to have his company play to good houses but as he notes in his autobiography ' Year after year Miss Bayliss' companies played to percentage capacity which was the envy of other theatres, but, year after year, the expenditure exceeded the takings.'[20]

The Open Air Theatre.

The Open Air Theatre in Regent's Park was an initiative begun by Sidney Carroll in 1932 with a performance of *Twelfth Night* which was then running in matinée performances at the New Theatre. The first full season opened in the summer of 1933, again with *Twelfth Night*, directed by Robert Atkins, who directed all but two of the thirty-four productions between 1933 and 1939. The attendance at the first night was estimated at between three and four thousand, and the first season's

[17] Tyrone Guthrie, *A Life in the Theatre* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1961), p. 99.
[18] E. Harcourt Williams, *Four Years at the Old Vic* (London: Putnam, 1935). p. 91.
[19] Audrey Williamson, *Old Vic Drama* (London: Rockliff, 1948), p. 2.
[20] Tyrone Guthrie, *ibid.* p. 101.

attendance was allegedly 250000. The vagueness of these estimates may explain the fact that the theatre lost £3000 in the first season. It is questionable whether or not the commercial management of the venue was the equal of the artistic management. The theatre never made a profit in the period.

At the Open Air Theatre, thirteen plays in the canon were produced, with a predominance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which comprised 39% of the total, *The Tempest*, 15%, *Twelfth Night*, 12% and *As You Like It*, 12%. These performances represent 78% of the 705 in the period. Absent from the schedule is *Hamlet*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, the Tragedies only being represented by eighteen performance of *Julius Caesar*, and seven of *Romeo and Juliet.* The Histories are similarly under-represented with only seven performances of *Richard III* and twenty of *Henry VIII.*

The foregoing provides some indications of the marketing of the venue in terms of audience constituency. Audiences of the Open Air Theatre bore little similarity to those of the Old Vic. There is much anecdotal evidence which suggests that a visit to the Open Air Theatre was considered to be a light, social event rather than the earnest and inquisitive kind by the audiences at the Old Vic. The following refers to an extended run of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Open Air Theatre:

> The novelty of an open air theatre is appealing to American and Continental visitors' Mr. Carroll said, 'A highlight of the show is the dancing of lovely Norwegian Greta Gynt. Attendances at the Open Air Theatre this year are already 2000 up on last'[21]

The summer of 1936 was warmer and drier than the previous year, thus it could be assumed that larger audiences were likely. The fact that the 'novelty' appealed to tourists is rather more salient. It can also be assumed that novelty was a major selling point of the theatre and that the audiences responded accordingly by including picnic

[21] *Daily Express* 31 July 1936, p. 3.

baskets as part of their theatre-going equipment. The dancing of Greta Gynt as the 'highlight of the *show*' also bears some testimony to the nature of the occasion. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is perhaps the most likely of the plays to which the term 'show' can be used. The term was used only very rarely in those days in connection with the plays of Shakespeare, but it is understandable why this play was by far the most frequently performed.

It might be alleged that the Open Air Theatre was not a venue for 'serious' Shakespeare, given the omission of so many plays in the repertoire and the reluctance of 'stars' such as John Gielgud, Ralph Richardson, Vivien Leigh and Laurence Olivier to perform there. Whilst such an assertion is logical, it is irrelevant if the assumed marketing strategy of the management is understood. There is no written evidence of such a strategy but it can be inferred that the choice of plays and the style of their performance was geared to the notion that Shakespeare had to be made to appeal to a wider audience than might attend a normal theatre and that the occasion should be enjoyed as a social event. The success, at least in attendance figures, is still evident today (2011) as the Open Air Theatre continues its appeal and its restricted repertoire. An unquantifiable potential benefit of the theatre was the probability that many people were introduced to Shakespeare there, and may consequently had become regular or occasional visitors to other venues. As a 'showcase' for Shakespeare, the Open Air Theatre was ideal.

Robert Atkins was the dominant producer/director at the Open Air, but reference to schedule 2 shows that he also directed at the Old Vic as well as occasionally at the Strand and other West End theatres. Atkins exemplified the notion of the theatre in transition: he was connected to the almost evangelical approach to the Shakespeare of Lilian Bayliss, yet was able to experiment with open air theatre whilst

also engaging with the purist notions of those promoting a move towards a rationalized Elizabethan stage. George Powell, editor of Atkins' unfinished autobiography wrote in his introduction that he:

> constituted a rare, if not unique, link between the Edwardian theatre with its actor-management of Tree, Forbes-Robertson, Martin Harvey and many more, and the counter-movement towards 'authentic' Shakespeare, a gospel preached by William Poel, taken up by Granville Barker and developed in the imaginative approach of John Gielgud and others.[22]

Other Venues

The theatre of the times, particularly in London with the mass of new writers, moved from tradition to experiment and then to a synthesis of the two. Gielgud himself refers to 'the freakish tendencies [of the theatre] between the two wars.'[23] The new Sadler's Wells theatre established in 1930 by Lilian Bayliss, again in a fringe area of London, was a short-lived experiment in a 'brutalist' theatre to bring Shakespeare to a wider audience in an 'authentic' style. The plan to alternate plays between the Old Vic and the Sadler's Wells had limited success, pioneered by Harcourt Williams, but as the statistics show in Schedule 2, performance runs were poor and the experiment became unsustainable.

Following the success of his production of *The Merchant of Venice* at the Old Vic in 1932, Gielgud ventured as a director into the West End, supported ironically by Beaumont with two of the productions, and proved that Shakespeare did succeed there, but only via the 'star' status of him and his fellow actors:

1932	*The Merchant of Venice*	Old Vic	24 performances
1934	*Hamlet*	New Theatre	155 "
1935	*Romeo and Juliet*	New Theatre	186 "

[22] Robert Atkins, *An Unfinished Biography* ed. by George Rowell (London: S.T.R., 1994), p. ix.
[23] John Gielgud, *Stage Directions* (London: Heinemann, 1963), p. 23.

1938	*The Merchant of Venice*	Queen's Theatre	60	"
1939	*Hamlet*	Lyceum	6	"

The short run of the second *Hamlet* was due to the temporary closure of theatres because of the outbreak of war. A further irony is that Shakespeare was the most-performed dramatist on the German stage in the 1920s and 1930s; the figures for the period 1932/3 to 1939/40 showing 747 productions and 10539 performances, an average performance run of 14.[24] This compares (Schedule 2a) with 153 productions and 3843 performances on the London stage.

Although this study is concerned with the London stage, it is useful briefly to illustrate Shakespeare on stage in Birmingham, Britain's second largest city. Schedule 3 shows the number of productions of Shakespeare's plays at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre each year from 1919 to 1939, as a proportion of the total number of productions. In 1919 and 1920, one quarter of all productions at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre were plays of Shakespeare, but this proportion fell as the decade progressed. There were twenty-two productions from 1919 to 1929 and only two in the whole of the 1930s: *Hamlet* in 1935 and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1936. For eight of the years of the 1930s there were no productions of Shakespeare. The overall proportion of Shakespeare in the two decades was 6.5%, twenty-four out of 368. The only two other Renaissance plays in the period at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre were *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* by Beaumont and Fletcher, and Ben Jonson's *Volpone.* The trends in Birmingham, whilst not exactly the same as the London stages reflect the same causes of decline in Shakespeare productions: the end of the era of the Shakespearean actor-manager, the increased costs of production and the rise of the modern dramatists. Wilde, Shaw, Barrie, Galsworthy and Phillpotts

[24] Rodney Symington, *The Nazi Appropriation of Shakespeare* (Lampeter, New York, Ontario: The Edward Mellon Press Ltd., 2005), pp. 1 & 167.

featured increasingly in the repertoire in Birmingham, joined by the plays of J.B. Priestley in the 1930s.

Sheffield, a city with a population of 500000 in 1919, had two 'straight' theatres by 1930, and three variety houses or music halls. The Sheffield Repertory Company was started by a group of amateurs in 1920 at a small theatre called the Little Theatre of the Settlement which seated only 150. Geoffrey Bullough wrote that 'theatre was *inevitably* middle-class in membership and appeal'.[25] I have italicized here to query the assumption, in the absence of specific data, that whilst it may be that the constituency of the audience actually *was* middle-class, the 'appeal' of the repertoire, as reported below, was clearly intended for all classes. As previously discussed, the unemployment figures for the north of England were particularly severe and it is thus likely that the working-classes were deterred from the theatre simply on the basis of cost. The advent of radio and talking pictures would also have an effect, given the relatively cheaper entertainment option which they presented.

Between 1920 and 1934 there were thirteen plays at the Sheffield Repertory Theatre which may be described loosely as 'classical' or 'traditional': one of Euripides, four of Ibsen, two of Molière, one Strindberg, one Wilde and four Shakespeare. These latter four comprised *Twelfth Night* in 1921, *As You Like It* 1931, *Othello*1932 and *Hamlet* in 1933. There were 110 plays for the period 1920 to 1934; as well as the plays above there were thirteen modern foreign plays, five Irish plays, six 'northern' plays and seventy-three modern British plays of which seven were by Barrie, Coward and Galsworthy, ten by Milner and eleven by Shaw. Shakespeare represents 3.6% of the output in the period. From 1934 to 1945, seventy plays were produced, of which five were Shakespeare's, a proportion of 7%. As with the London

[25] Geoffrey Bullough, 'An English Repertory Theatre between the Wars', *Modernist Studies* 1 (1974), p. 31.

theatre there is evidence that World War II saw a resurgence of Shakespeare, a phenomenon discussed later.

The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford upon Avon is anomalous to the main thesis in view of its uniqueness as a quasi 'temple' to the memory of England's supposed national poet and dramatist. A schedule of Shakespeare's plays at Stratford between 1919 and 1939 is shown at Schedule 5, where it is pertinent to note that in spite of the special nature of that theatre, five of the canon were not performed in those twenty years: *Pericles, Troilus and Cressida* and the three parts of *King Henry VI. The Two Noble Kinsmen* was not produced, possibly on the basis that its authorship was in doubt. Of the thirty-one plays which were produced, the most popular reflected the same trend as the London productions. The most played were *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Twelfth Night*, with *As You Like It, Macbeth, Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Taming of the Shrew* following closely. Against the trend was *The Merry Wives of Windsor* which was produced ten times.

It is not feasible to compare the Memorial Theatre with the general theatre but there are nevertheless some salient points in its history which bear upon the problems which faced the proponents of Shakespeare on stage. The main problem was funding the theatre. After the fire in 1926, the raising of finance for the new theatre became critical as the Governors sought to make up for large shortfalls. A leading article in the *Daily Express* was headlined 'Memorial Theatre Surprise', with a second head saying '£60,000 Deficiency in the English Fund', and a third saying. 'Appeal to America':

> Mr. A.D. Flower, chairman of the Shakespeare Memorial Governors, will sail from Southampton tomorrow for New York. He is travelling in an unofficial capacity, but his object, it is stated, is to see whether America will provide the financial assistance

which has not been forthcoming in this country.[26]

Flower's journey was not in vain: the *Daily Telegraph* reported a year later that John D. Rockefeller had made a donation of £100000.[27] Whilst this was welcomed by the Governors at Stratford, the notion of a National Shakespeare Theatre in London became a more distant prospect because of it. There were at least two serious proposals, one for a theatre in Bloomsbury and the other for a development of Dorchester House in Mayfair which eventually became a hotel. The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford upon Avon effectively ended the prospect of a theatre specifically devoted to Shakespeare in London, at least that is until some sixty years later when the privately-funded 'Shakespeare's Globe' opened on the South Bank. Shakespeare on the stage was therefore, in spite of innovative productions, dedicated proponents such as Gielgud, Guthrie, Bayliss *et al*, the Open Air Theatre and the traditions which accompanied the name of the playwright, forced to operate at both the geographical and financial margins in an era of unprecedented changes in society.

Whether considering 'Shakespeare' as a tradition or an institution, there was a relentless trend towards modern dramatists, new technologies and away from old techniques and styles of production. Emerging from this however, is the argument that attendance at a production of Shakespeare was not seen as an élitist activity. The audiences, however reduced as the period wore on, continued to be drawn from a variety of backgrounds Therein lay one of the main problems for the future of Shakespeare on stage; when radio and talking motion pictures began to attract mass audiences, and those audiences were also drawn also from every sector of society.

[26] *Daily Express* 6 November 1926, p. 3.
[27] *Daily Telegraph* 2 November 1927, p. 1.

Radio

The views of William Poel and Harley Granville Barker, endorsed by such as Tyrone Guthrie, as discussed above, were in the simplest of terms, that a performance of Shakespeare should be as free of visual clutter as possible, that the verse should be delivered in a normal speaking voice at a normal rate of speech, and that the *words* of Shakespeare should be the most prominent aspect of the performance. In the light of this, it could be seen that the advent of nationally broadcast radio in 1922 would bring opportunities for Shakespeare in performance which had not previously existed. The opportunity for academic and teacher, director and actor, intellectual and enthusiast to hear a play of Shakespeare in its purest form, as some may have claimed, was now available. This part of the chapter will argue however, that whilst such opportunities existed, they were not exploited by the British Broadcasting Company (Corporation from 1926) with any palpable strategy or commitment. A schedule of all plays and adaptations on BBC radio between 1922 and 1939 is shown at Schedule 6.

The rapid expansion of radio coverage may be attributed to three factors. The first was the exponential growth of the electricity supply system, which was discussed in chapter one. Whilst it was not necessary to link radio to a mains supply, it was desirable and convenient to do so, although for some years after World War II many radios were still powered by wet-cell batteries. Secondly, there was a similar growth in the manufacture and sales of radio-receivers. By 1923 there were 600,000 licences in Britain; this had risen to more than one million by 1924.[28] Thirdly, there was a fall in the cost of living in the 1930s for most of those in employment, as also discussed in chapter one.[29] This enabled more purchases of household goods, especially radio sets, which became a priority purchase, ahead of such items as vacuum cleaners and

[28] Asa Briggs, *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom: The Birth of Broadcasting 1896-1927* Vol 1. 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 7.
[29] D.H. Aldcroft, *The Inter-War Economy: Britain 1919-1939* (London: Batsford,1970), pp. 352-364

washing machines, mainly because a 'wireless set' was not only cheaper, but was novel, entertaining, and for the use of a family group, which would often listen to it as such.

The notion of a government-owned and centrally driven national medium, run by a supposedly independent BBC, was unprecedented and controversial. State control was not a concept which sat easily with a caste whose forefathers had presided over a long period of *laissez faire* government and who were attuned to major private initiatives and investments such as railways, shipbuilding and mining.

> It is very difficult to explain to an innocent foreigner that the alleged independence of the BBC from government control is not another example of British duplicity; the setting up of a puppet concern which can be used as required and disowned as necessary.[30]

The rising popularity of radio was not seen initially as a threat to the stage. Up to 1923 West End managers conceded the right for restricted broadcasting of excerpts, believing such exposure to be useful advertising. The right was withdrawn when the managers began to consider radio as a direct competitor. As so little Shakespeare was performed on the West End stage it was considered a special case by the radio authorities who seemed at the time to be anxious to adopt the 'national poet'. In an anonymous article on C.A. Lewis, Deputy Director of Programmes, the *Radio Times* in 1923 said:

> It is fine to come across a true believer in Shakespeare nowadays when the West End repudiates his plays, and they are left to excellent acting, but poor productive powers of suburban theatres…Mr. Lewis… may yet prove the means of re-establishing Shakespeare in his rightful position.[31]

[30] Geoffrey Tandy, 'Broadcasting Chronicle', *Criterion Magazine*, 15 (1936), p. 680.
[31] *Radio Times*, 23 October 1923

The telling use of the phrase 'rightful position' is evidence of a BBC hierarchy bent upon a kind of cultural restoration in the midst of what was seen by many as the overbearing commercialism which was beginning to prevail. The main obstacle to the massive renaissance of Shakespeare which the BBC now had the power to promote, was the complexities of scheduling, the resistance of audiences and the lack of a coherent strategy.

The first broadcast by the BBC was on 14 November 1922; the first Shakespeare on radio was three months later on 16 February 1923 with various scenes from *Julius Caesar*, *Much Ado about Nothing* and *King Henry VIII.* The first 'complete' play was *Twelfth Night* on 28 May 1923, a production of 135 minutes. This performance was not universally heralded as a new era for Shakespeare within the new medium. Under the headline 'All the World's a Phone', the *Daily Express* next day, in a long review, implied that only someone who was familiar with Shakespeare would have derived any pleasure from the production.[32] The newspaper appears to have failed to recognize that the same might be said of a stage production. The question of initiation to Shakespeare has been raised previously in this thesis; the *Express* article suggests that radio was being used as such an initiation tool. If radio was seen as such there were severe limitations upon it, for radio quite obviously does *not* fulfil the Poelist ideology because in his 'Elizabethan' view, the audience must *hear* the play but they must be in a theatre to do so. On the other hand, those who were familiar with Shakespeare and who therefore would be likely theatre-goers, would have had no problem with *Twelfth Night* on the 28th of May. There was however, an intention that radio would be used as an educational tool. John Reith was appointed General Manager of the BBC in December 1922, and Managing Director in

[32] *Daily Express* 29 May 1923

November 1923. His doctrine of 'Educate, Inform, Entertain' was pursued with the introduction of plays for schools in 1928 when *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was broadcast between 3.30pm and 4.30pm on 29 June. The play was severely abridged, as were the others in the programme, most consisting of scenes or parts of scenes which were considered suitable for minors. The rather sporadic nature of the broadcasts for schools can be seen in the schedule.

The productions intended for an adult audience had to compete for air-time with all of the other output, there being only one wavelength available to the majority of listeners. With the exception of the productions of *Twelfth Night,* the first ever production on 28 May 1923, and *Coriolanus* on 26/27 April 1933, there was a restriction of two hours maximum duration which covered eighteen productions. The rest of the output of Shakespeare consisted of either severely edited productions of seventy-five or ninety minutes, or simply a presentation of scenes. The schedule shows that the detail is incomplete for a number of plays. This is not due to inadequate research but to the poor record-keeping and administration of the BBC, where laxity appears to have existed in the matter of record-keeping for the new medium. Copies of the *Radio Times* and *The Listener* were not routinely archived, leaving at least ten broadcasts without adequate documentary support.

If it is allowed that sixty-one broadcasts of Shakespeare's plays of all descriptions were made in a period of twenty years; an output of three per year, then it could be alleged that the BBC failed as champions of the country's supposedly most popular poet and dramatist. There is something of a paradox in the BBC corporate attitude to the subject. In 1929, Val Gielgud received a directive that at least eight plays by Shakespeare should be broadcast each year. Gielgud was a proponent of Shakespeare and said that 'I saw the broadcasting of plays [of all types] grow from an

indifferent joke to professional maturity.'[33] The *BBC Yearbook* of 1930, demonstrating confidence in the new medium, said:

> …as an art form of its own…a form so different from the art of the theatre that, with certain big exceptions, amongst which are Shakespeare's plays, the stage is becoming to be regarded less and less as a source of supply.[34]

The yearbook of 1933 went further saying that 'of stage plays adapted for the microphone, none can be as sure of a welcome as Shakespeare's.'[35] In spite of this supportive rhetoric however, the primary objective, as the schedule shows, was never achieved. Eleven of Shakespeare's plays were never broadcast and the schedule shows considerable truncation of many which were. This might be explained by a number of factors such as the suitability of some plays such as *Titus Andronicus* for a wide audience, the complexity of plays such as *The Comedy of Errors,* or the production difficulties for *Julius Caesar,* with so many voices. The three parts of *Henry VI* are absent from the scheduling for reasons unknown. The *Yearbook* statement in 1930 gives an unwitting clue to another reason for the restricted output of Shakespeare. The first play on the radio was broadcast five months before the *Twelfth Night* production of 28 May 1923. The play was *Danger* by Richard Hughes and was a story of coal-mining in south Wales. The significance here was that *Danger* was written specifically for radio rather than for the stage, and was therefore much easier to produce than a play which had to be adapted for the new medium. From 1922, playwrights were encouraged by the BBC to submit scripts which would fit into their schedules, which usually consisted of 'slots' of fifteen, thirty or sixty minutes. A Shakespeare play which might in its normal form range from two to four hours, say from *Love's Labours Lost* to *Hamlet,* caused problems of time and costs in adaptation.

[33] Val Gielgud, *British Radio Drama 1922-1956* (London: Harrap, 1957) p. 8.
[34] *BBC Yearbook,* 1930. p. 233.
[35] *BBC Yearbook,* 1933. p. 71.

It was also necessary to consider how much abbreviation a play could suffer without losing its integrity; would a listener who is a Shakespeare enthusiast return to radio drama again if *King John* is reduced to an hour in the first Shakespeare he hears on radio? This question of audience response was a largely unknown factor in the period. The output of the BBC was prescriptive rather than responsive, and if the corporation was able to operate within its budget, provided mainly by the licence fee, there was no reason for the governors to be concerned.

The BBC did not carry out any systematic audience research until 1936. Research had been viewed with suspicion by Reith, who thought that any findings might lead to programme scheduling which was designed to be merely popular rather than educative, informative and *suitably* entertaining. Hindsight suggests that the Reithian era of radio was authoritarian to the point of dictatorship. Another view however, might be that in a time of changing fashion, behaviour and loyalties, Reith and his management establishment successfully maintained high standards of output which pandered neither to populism nor neophilia. Research was therefore viewed with caution:

> Any research that might be undertaken should be so controlled as to secure that it never developed [sic] from a servant into a master, to the detriment of the essential qualities of good broadcasting – a responsible but sensitive outlook an a readiness to experiment.[36]

Robert Silvey, who was head of BBC audience research from 1936 to 1960, guided by this memorandum, developed the process of research from scratch and was inevitably concerned initially with basic questions such as L.R. 57 of 1938 which was entitled 'What Time Do People Have Their Meals?' and L.R. 67, 'Winter Listening Habits', of the same year. At no time during the period did listener research deal with the

[36] GAC 23, memorandum by Sir Stephen Tallents to the BBC General Advisory Council, 1936.

reception of Shakespeare according to the opinions of the listener. There were unsystematic channels of audience information available via Advisory Committees, public meetings and personal contacts. Correspondence between listeners and the BBC 'was considerable (over 50000 items a year by 1927) and [were] heartfelt, if not necessarily representative.'[37]

Reith's authoritarian style of management did not prevent misgivings and debate within the BBC:

> In May, 1930, Charles Siepmann of the Talks Department and Val Gielgud, Director of Features and Drama, both of whom had long expressed frustration at the lack of substantive information about the audiences for their programmes, strongly argued for a more systematic approach in response to those who feared the tyranny of crude audience figures.[38]

In spite of, or maybe because of all this, Gielgud's task of ensuring the production of eight Shakespeare plays per year from 1933 to 1939 was not completed by one quarter. Gielgud did not discuss why such a failure occurred. The most likely explanation is that programme scheduling, at a time of restricted wavelength availability and the other competing programme makers dictated that lengthy plays came to be viewed as an occasional luxury. However educative Shakespeare's plays may have been deemed by Reith and his board, and however much eschewed was the notion of a populist BBC, Shakespeare did not fit into radio as well as had been expected in the early days before innovative musical, documentary, variety and current affairs programmes dominated the airwaves.

Some assumptions can be made on the effects of radio upon the stage and Shakespeare. The first must be that it is unlikely that radio had any effect upon

[37] BBC Audience Research Reports, Part 1: BBC Listener Research Department 1937- c1950 (Wakefield: Microform Academic Publishers, 2006), p. 2
[38] *Ibid.* p. 3

Shakespeare on the London stage. Whilst radio may have had some effect upon theatre-going in general, the paucity of Shakespeare's plays in the West End on one hand, and the dedicated nature of the Old Vic audience on the other, lead to a view that radio had little or no effect. The tourist and novelty-seeking audiences at the Open Air theatre would also be unaffected by it. The development of radio was coincidental to other developments and innovations such as the motor car, talking pictures, paid holidays and a constantly improving standard of living, all of which had an effect on the ways in which the ninety per cent of the population which was employed, spent its time and money. This being finite, it follows that if there are more options for its disposition, some sectors will benefit and others will not. The advantage held by radio was that once the capital cost of the radio set was paid there remained only the annual cost of the licence and perhaps the weekly cost of the *Radio Times*. It is unlikely that the costs on revenue for a radio were thought of as part of a household budget, but theatre costs would.

Shakespeare on radio never achieved the position of dominance which some had expected or in the case of the BBC, imperfectly planned. The failure of Shakespeare in a new medium to which it was well-suited can be summarised in three main areas. The first is the failure over twenty years to produce the complete canon. Given Shakespeare's accorded status of 'national poet', it must have followed that at the very least, the plays in the First Folio could have been broadcast in something approximating a full text of a modern edition. It may be argued that *The Comedy of Errors,* depending upon the visual recognition of double sets of twins, might be impracticable on radio. But then it could equally be asked why *Twelfth Night* was selected as the inaugural Shakespeare play on radio, this being a play with the complexity of identical twins of opposite sexes. The second failure was the

compromising of the texts which were aired, and the truncating of plays. There is no evidence that a play on radio of Shaw, Priestley, Galsworthy or Barrie was reduced by as much as a single line. The third and the most salient of the reasons for failure was an apparent lack of strategy. There was no clearly expressed view by any BBC executive, including Reith, whether Shakespeare was to be considered purely educative or purely entertaining, whether it was essential for schools in one form and for adults in another, or whether there existed a duty to air Shakespeare, or whether it was worth taking the risk that Shakespeare might actually be popular with a wide audience. Professional audience research might have established a position for Shakespeare and might have thus brought Shakespeare to a wider audience. Conversely, a position might have been ascertained from systematic research which suggested that Shakespeare was largely unsuited to the medium.

Film

The first generally acknowledged Shakespeare on commercial film was in 1899, when a series of scenes from Beerbohm-Tree's *King John*, then playing at Her Majesty's Theatre, was shown in a one-minute Multiscope version. It was claimed that 170000 people saw the production.[39] Even if this claim is credible, it should not be inferred that the high attendance was due to the choice of Shakespeare as a subject, although *King John* was a popular play in the nineteenth century. A modern view should take into account the impact of the novelty of the new technology of film, and attempt to understand it in the social context of the times. The one-minute silent film was probably popular merely because of its novelty; the involvement of Shakespeare was incidental. A view the relevant schedules will show that *King John* has never in

[39] John Collick, *Shakespeare, Cinema and Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), p. 35.

modern times been a play with high exposure and has never been much favoured by producers and directors.

Referring to the era of silent films from 1899 to 1929, Kenneth Rothwell states that 'of an estimated 150,000 silent movies, perhaps 500 would draw on Shakespeare'.[40] The salient words here are 'perhaps' and 'draw'. Such was the proliferation of film-making companies in that period, that accurate records are not available. Thus, even accepting the total number of films made as a reasonable estimate, the number of Shakespeare plays claimed should be treated with some scepticism. If the figures *are* accepted, the proportion of Shakespeare plays represents about 0.3%. Rothwell, in using 'draw', implies that there was tendency for productions then to be adaptations of scenes from Shakespeare rather than attempts at anything approaching a faithful reproduction of a reasonably edited text. This tendency continued in the time of talking pictures. This part of the chapter discusses only talking pictures on the basis that the study of Shakespeare on film without words, however experimentally interesting, is not pertinent.

Silent films however, were popular in the early part of the century to such an extent that a large and unregulated industry produced thousands of short films each year. American films dominated the British market because of high investment not only in production but also in the process of marketing and distribution. There was no serious challenge to the American industry at home, so it was natural for the aggressive techniques of their studios to seek expansion overseas. The advent of talking pictures in 1928 made all Anglophone countries an even larger sales opportunity for the American film industry.

[40] Kenneth S. Rothwell, *A History of Shakespeare on Screen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 1.

In 1927 the British Government passed the Cinematograph Film Act which demanded, *inter alia*, quotas on the importation of foreign films. Although this caused an expansion of the British film industry, the quota system became unmanageable in the 1930s due entirely to the public demand for 'Hollywood' films and their film stars who became as familiar to British audiences as they were in their home country. Such was the investment by the Americans and such was the appetite of British audiences for their films, that the market from 1930 to 1939 was overwhelmed by films which were shown in cinemas controlled by American companies or their British agencies. Writing of the importance of 'Oscar Deutsch's Odeons' spreading across the country in the 1930s, Allen Eyles speaks of '…luxury cinema-going to the suburbs, and [Deutsch] aiming to put up-market picture palaces on the high street of every big town and city.'[41] A schedule of seventy-six Hollywood-based films which were box office successes in the 1930s is shown at Schedule 7. Reference to this schedule will show that many were based upon English novels, stories and history. The American film-makers were unafraid to take the traditions of a country and impose their own interpretations. The schedule also reflects what has been referred to as the 'golden age of Hollywood', when the star system was at its zenith, and operated in the United Kingdom and the United States simultaneously.

The wide appeal of the new medium of talking pictures was a revolution in personal entertainment. The class divisions of British society were carefully preserved in the cinema, with a multi-pricing system similar to live theatre. The wide appeal drew a disproportionate number of people from the working classes largely by restricting the price of the cheapest seats (in 1934) to one shilling (5p), when a man's average weekly wage was £2 16s, (£2.80). It was estimated that in 1937/38, five-

[41] Allen Eyles, 'Oscar and the Odeons' *Focus on Film* 22 (1975), 38-57, p. 40.

eighths of the total household expenditure on entertainment went to the cinema.[42] In London in 1911 there were ninety-four registered cinemas with 55000 seats. By 1930 this had risen to 258 cinemas with 344000 seats.[43] An example of the newly-acquired facility of cinema for the working classes is exemplified in Simon Rawson's survey of 1934 which showed that two areas which were particularly badly affected by unemployment, Lancashire and Scotland, were the highest in respect of the proportion of available cinema seats, with a ratio of one for every nine people.[44]

The first synchronized sound of Shakespeare on film pre-dates the generally accepted year of 1928 as the beginning of the 'talkies'. It was a ten-minute presentation of parts of *The Merchant of Venice,* produced for DeForest Phonofilms in 1927, and was an experiment to determine whether or not synchronization of sound and vision was a feasible marketing concept. The first feature-length Shakespeare as a serious attempt at capturing a box-office return was the 1929 production of the American-owned Pickford Corporation's *The Taming of the Shrew,* which was directed by Sam Taylor and which starred Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks. The feature length was sixty-three minutes and the film was not reported as a success.

Rheinhardt and Dieterle's *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* A Short Case-Study

It was not until 1935 that another feature-length production came to the British box-office, via another American company. This was the production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* directed by Max Rheinhardt and William Dieterle, which starred well-known actors: James Cagney, Dick Powell, Mickey Rooney and Olivia de Havilland. An examination of this film identifies what might be called 'Shakespeare

[42] R. Stone and D.A. Rowe *The Measurement of Consumer's Expenditure in the UK 1920-1938* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p. 81.
[43] <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/English/Collections/OnlineResources/X20L/Themes/>
[44] Simon Rawson, 'A Statistical Survey of the Cinema in Britain in 1934', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 99 (1936), p. 115.

and the Hollywood Problem', which also became a problem for the British distributors and helped to explain the failure of Shakespeare on screen in America and Britain however much *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was regarded later in the century, and into the next, as a *succès d'estime.*

Max Reinhardt's production traced its beginnings to a stage production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1905, directed by him which went on an extended tour of the United States. It emerged again as a well-received production on the New York stage in 1928 and ultimately at the Hollywood Bowl in 1934, a production which was widely advertised and praised. In many of the performances, Reinhardt's co-director of the eventual film, William (Wilhelm) Dieterle, who had emigrated from Germany in 1930, played the part of Lysander. Dieterle's accreditation as Co-Director was probably as much a matter of practical expediency as one of artistic influence. Reinhardt did not speak English at the time and so Dieterle acted as translator and general messenger between him and the large cast and even larger production team. The play was also produced in Salzburg in 1932, Florence in 1933, and at Oxford in the same year.

During the play's extensive run, the Nazi party gained power in Germany and within months had introduced policies which were a threat to Jews. Both Dieterle and Reinhardt were Jewish, as was Jack Warner, of Warner Brothers Pictures, who was born in Ontario in 1892, the youngest of twelve children of a Polish emigré. His background had some influence upon the artistic style of the film. By 1935, Warner Brothers had become a successful company; the decision was taken to add to its growing dominance by producing *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* There are various opinions on Warner's decision, the most common alleging his desire for prestige within the industry. Russell Jackson, pointing out the wording of the film's opening

credits: 'Warner Brothers is Honored to Present', goes on to say that 'The Reinhardt-Dieterle *Dream* is a notable example of a Hollywood studio's desire to enhance its public image by presenting Shakespeare'.[45]

Warner chose to make the film in black and white rather than in the newly-improved 'Process 3' colour system. Although the production provided an abundance of fairies and woodland, it was, following the stage concept, a 'dark' production with a sinister *leitmotiv*, designed by Anton Grot, redolent of Grimm's fairy stories and the art of Arthur Rackham. The film cost $1.5m. to produce, and was edited from 132 minutes to 117 for its release in New York on 9 October 1935. Not only did the film fail at the box-office but it also failed to achieve the critical approbation which Warner anticipated. A contemporary review in *The Yale Review* said,

> The reason for this [relatively poor business for the production]…may be in part that the spirit of compromise made the producers, who were so austere in most respects, weaken long enough to indulge in a bit of box-office casting which turned out to be neither good casting nor good box-office…For one thing, the picture is far too long. Half an hour of the ballets would have come out to admirable effect. A lot less of Puck's boyish screams would have been a great blessing. In addition there is, on occasion a touch of heavy-handedness…which seems more Teutonic than cinematic.[46]

Warner had given Reinhardt *carte blanche* to recruit all of the well-known stars of Hollywood who were available or under contract and who, it was no doubt hoped, would attract large audiences. It can be inferred from Watts' comments that Warners had uncharacteristically decided to abandon caution for this project of claimed prestige. Eric Korngold, a Moravian Jewish emigré who had been a child prodigy as a composer was appointed as musical director to adapt the incidental music of Felix Mendelsohn Bartholdy. As a final flourish, the film also included a 'Dawn Ballet',

[45] Russell Jackson, 'Shakespeare's Comedies on Film', in *Shakespeare and the Moving Image*, ed. by Anthony Davies and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 99-120, p.106
[46] Richard Watts Jnr., 'Films of a Moonstruck World', *The Yale Review* 25.2 (1935), 311-320, p. 314

much in the style of Busby Berkeley spectacular, popular on the screen at that time. It seemed that everything which could be done to please an audience of wide-ranging tastes had been done.

Thus, with a record budget, a renowned director, a heavily star-laden cast, the finest of musical directors and the distribution power of Warner Brothers, the film failed at the box-office and with the majority of critics, although it was nominated for the award of 'Best Picture', which it failed to secure. The film did win two awards: Hal Mohr for the 'Best Cinematography', and Ralph Dawson for 'Best Film Editing'. There are a number of likely reasons for box-office failure. One is that Warner Brothers over-estimated both the acting abilities of the cast and its suitability for the interpretation of Shakespeare. Many of the cast had not acted on stage, and almost none had performed Shakespeare; their talent lay with the visual close-up, the short-sequence shot, and the skills of the editor. There was also the question of whether Warners were guilty of *folie de grandeur* in believing in their omnipotence as successful and powerful businessmen, to whom the notion of failure was unconsidered.

The most likely reason for failure is a serious misreading of the market. The film was extensively advertised and promoted in Britain and in America, with the level of budget which a film of such claimed prestige would attract. The cinema-going public in the 1930s did not appear to want Shakespeare when they could get the drama, glamour and sophistication which new writers put in modern English, or they could enjoy fantasies which were simple and colourful, such as *Mutiny on the Bounty* also in 1935, or *The Adventures of Robin Hood* in 1938. The length of Reinhardt's *Dream* was not necessarily a factor; a much longer film, *Gone with the Wind,* four years later, broke all records at the box-office in the two countries, running at 222

minutes or more, depending upon which version was viewed. Reinhardt's *Dream* was to have been the first in a series of Shakespeare productions from Warner Brothers, but after its failure in Britain and the United States the plan was abandoned, and the studio never produced another Shakespeare play. Instead, with directors including Daryl F. Zanuck, Hal Wallis, Michael Curtiz, they went on to produce financially successful films where their contracted stars such as Humphrey Bogart, Bette Davis, James Cagney, Errol Flynn and Edward G. Robinson and others could be deployed in the style and *genre* to which they were best suited.

Other 'Shakespeares' on Film

The ninety-six minute, *As You Like It* in 1936, directed by Paul Czinner for Twentieth Century Fox, starring Laurence Olivier, was adapted and written by J.M. Barrie and Robert Cullen 'from the play by William Shakespeare'. It was also a failure at the box-office, probably because the play was one of the lesser known in the United States, and because Czinner's wife, Elisabeth Bergner, spoke Rosalynd in a heavy German accent, imparting a humour that neither Shakespeare nor Barrie intended. It is likely however, that due to Olivier's inclusion in the cast, many thousands of British people became aware of *As You Like It* and Shakespeare for the first time.

The only other serious attempt to bring Shakespeare to the mass audience of the cinema was George Cukor's 1936 film of *Romeo and Juliet* for Metro Goldwyn Mayer. At 124 minutes this was as near to a 'full' text version as film-makers would achieve before World War II. The scriptwriter, Renato Castellani excised or modified only those lines or phrases which might have proved incomprehensible to the Shakespeare initiate. Again, the presence of star actors - Moira Shearer, Leslie

Howard, John Barrymore and Basil Rathbone - ensured public interest. The foregoing examples identify a format which typifies the approach which was considered necessary to make Shakespeare digestible to new audiences. The questions remain: was this format in support of or opposed to a 'correct' view of Shakespeare; was Shakespeare devalued or enhanced by such adaptation. Should Shakespeare scholars, academics and professional theatre directors be the arbiters of what Shakespeare should look and sound like, or is there a Shakespeare which can suit all intellects and social groups. The argument returns to that which was discussed in the introduction to this thesis: can 'Shakespeare' flourish as brand, industry, idol or tradition if 'it' is left to find its own niche in whatever academic or socio-economic compartment is able to nurture it?

End Note

There is more than one conclusion which can be drawn from this chapter. It may be inferred from the statistical analyses in the schedules that Shakespeare failed in performance on the stage and on film in the face of the new mass markets which came to dominate the period between the wars. It is possible that the 300 year-old traditions which followed or had been artificially implanted of the notion of a national poet and dramatist, worked against a counter-notion of a modern society, anxious to break from tradition and embrace arts and entertainment which were not reminders of the customs and styles of persistent old and failed regimes.

On the other hand, given these very dominant themes of novelty and iconoclasm, it might be inferred that Shakespeare proved resilient in the hands of those who were committed to it. The London stage may have extended, to a certain extent, from the earnest Shakespeare enthusiast to the 'Shakespeare Tourism' of the

Open Air Theatre, but as asked above: to what extent does that matter? If the 'Shakespeare tradition' was nurtured after World War I in a manner which was different from past methods and ideologies, such a change of method was probably desirable if it results in the promotion of the works.

It may also be inferred that Shakespeare failed on radio because in performance, Shakespeare must be visual rather than visualised. Such an argument, I contend, is flawed. Poel and others were untiring in their quest for what might be called a 'less visual' Shakespeare where the integrity of the words and the standard of acting predominate over visual irrelevance. Shakespeare was not performed on radio as frequently as enthusiasts may have wished, or would not have been so carelessly edited, had a strategy existed for the promotion of the entire canon. Perhaps such a strategy did not exist because of the exigencies of scheduling. On the other hand, it is argued that Shakespeare did not fail on radio, but was represented to a sufficient degree which ensured his prominence as the 'nation's national poet and playwright' as described in the introduction.

Shakespeare in the cinema did not succeed at the box-office until the 1944 production of *Henry V*, when Olivier and the War Office combined to present a propaganda film which brought many millions of people to Shakespeare for the first time. During the period under review however, Shakespeare would not be conceived as a rallying point or as a useful propaganda tool because of his perceived status by the mass audience as either the property of academics or of single-minded 'theatre people'. That Shakespeare was committed to film at all in the period was surprising, especially when considering Schedule 7, with scores of films of high quality and appeal available to all. Just as there was little, if any, Chekhov, Ibsen or Dickens on the screen, so was Shakespeare seen as a risk at the box-office. Shakespeare in

performance continued to be successful in that niche market which was its traditional forte, but that niche market was shrinking. Producers and directors on stage, radio and in the cinema were faced with new marketing and financial imperatives which were unknown in a previous era, and which had to be met to take advantage of markets which themselves did not exist until the 1920s.

EXAMINATION AND CONCLUSION

Overview.

There are specific themes and conclusions which recur throughout the thesis. This concluding chapter takes each of these in turn and then determines the relevance, importance and significance of each, as they relate to the title and the objectives of the thesis. The primary theme, which pervades each chapter, is that of change. There were for example, changes in the political constituency, such as the growth of the Labour movement, resulting in a Labour government for the first time, albeit a minority one, in 1924. There was subsequently, for the first time, a National Government which tried, and generally succeeded, at least at home, to manage the country through the 1930s. There was the enfranchisement of women over thirty years of age in 1919, which was followed by the Equal Franchise Act of 1928, giving votes to women between twenty-one and thirty. Such changes in the electoral system, possibly unimagined before the war, caused other changes in areas such as education, commerce and literary criticism, all of which impinged, to a greater or lesser degree, upon the study and consumption of Shakespeare.

There were also substantial changes in the demographics of the country, the results of which chapter one identified mainly as a growth of more prosperous middle and working classes in the midlands and the south of England, countered by high unemployment and derelict industries in the north. Such demographic changes provided both opportunity and threat to the study and performance of Shakespeare, demonstrated in chapter one by examining the new mass-markets and their effects upon literature, and in chapter four, which, amongst other things, observed the

changing theatre in response, or reaction, to the new commercial theatre, and the effects of radio and the cinema.

The changes identified in chapter one show the post World War era as quite specifically different from those which preceded it, and unprecedented because of the unique circumstances which were brought about, particularly from 1919 to 1930. There was an argument that culture during this time, especially regarding literature and poetry, might be immune to the effects of social and political change, by the process of isolation, or via a notion that 'high' culture is self-sustaining and can develop in a manner which provokes in society at large only disinterest, rather than a desire for change. Even during periods of history less dramatic than the one under review however, it is shown that culture and society, industry and commerce are not mutually exclusive entities:

> The growth of empirical science and the expansion of industrial, commercial and technological forms of society after the mid-eighteenth century thus encouraged a way of thinking about the indeterminacy of literature that was different from earlier ways…As modern science and commerce identified themselves with the procedures of clear, distinct thought and practical efficiency, it seemed natural for poets and literary critics to claim a special affinity with the more shadowy, undefined, and elusive regions of consciousness that commerce and science tended to ignore or undervalue.[210]

Graff is making the point that literature, prior to the mid-eighteenth century, was somehow set, or determined, aloof from what is now routinely, if haphazardly, referred to as the 'real world'. However natural or otherwise it was for poets and literary critics to 'claim a special affinity…', or how Graff was able to conclude that commerce and science 'tended to ignore or undervalue' those 'shadowy, undefined and elusive regions of consciousness', is open to question, but, nevertheless, the point

[210] Gerald Graff, 'Determinacy/Indeterminacy' in *Critical Terms for Literary Study* ed. by Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990) 163-175, p. 164

is made that in times of change, literature and poetry do not remain inert, especially if the changes are economically, technologically or politically driven. It was shown that the technological changes of, for example, talking-pictures and radio, were not the main drivers of change in attitudes, studies and performance of Shakespeare, but that other forces were at work.

Whilst technological and scientific change is largely manifest, and social and demographical change is usually evolutionary but evident, cultural change is a more elusive and indistinct process, largely unquantifiable and interpretive. It is appropriate here therefore, to contextualise 'culture' within the confines of this work. It would be impossible to assess cultural change between 1919 and 1939 under one heading. It is only marginally more convenient to subdivide culture into 'mass' and 'minority', given the great number of sub-classifications which might emerge. As far as minority cultures are concerned, an assessment must determine whether the area under discussion is a minority culture comprising say, theatrical designers, actors and directors, or a minority one, of philosophers and intellectuals based perhaps in discrete and discreet environments such as the study, the cloister, or in Bloomsbury. When discussing mass culture, it is necessary to establish whether every socio-economic group should be included in the discussion, or whether there is a differentiation between say, the culture of the cinema-going working-class on Tyneside, and the massed middle-classes of the Home Counties golf, tennis and Bridge club. As this thesis has dealt with widely varying aspects of the study, reception and performance of Shakespeare, it is more appropriate, in the light of the foregoing, to look at cultural change, and thereby its influences upon Shakespeare, in the specific areas covered.

Study and Criticism

The first area is that of literary criticism. The Modernist movements in the arts, which emerged or were revived after the war, discussed in chapter one, encouraged close examination of traditional techniques and concepts, producing an environment where nothing from the past was held to be immutable by those who embraced the new doctrines. In music and the visual arts, this attitude generated musical compositions, sculptures and paintings of styles not previously encountered. The 'new criticism' which formed, or reformed, at the same time, similarly encouraged the mainly younger writers and scholars to experiment and invent. Depending upon whether a writer held to tradition, or whether he or she embraced the new, this could be seen as either a threat or an opportunity for Shakespeare studies.

The more pessimistic person might have seen the main threat in the 1920s as being the 'end of Shakespeare', based upon the notion that the neophilia which appeared to be gripping art and literature in England, would provide no place for a three hundred year old canon which had become a relic which modern writers sought to eschew in an age of innovation and experiment. This 'end of Shakespeare', as is now obvious, did not happen. Instead, the modern and Modernist writers sought to establish a 'new' Shakespeare which fitted into newly acquired and developed concepts. This was not surprising when considering the choice which faced scholars and critics of the 1920s. For example, in the supposed enlightenment of Modernism, the question was asked whether Shakespeare should remain a fixed and reliable representative of the best of English drama and poetry, or should the new modernism somehow relegate the works to the same relative insignificance as those of Shakespeare's contemporaries, who were largely unrepresented by discrete societies, associations and institutions. It is reasonable to conclude however, that no choice

actually existed, because Shakespeare's omnipresence presented what was then, and still is, a seemingly indestructible 'brand', three hundred years in the making and preservation. In any case, as demonstrated in chapter three, the study of Shakespeare was now, in effect, a matter of decree, having been adopted into university and school curricula, and supported by initiatives such as the Newbolt Report, and promoted via such bodies as the English Association and the Shakespeare Society. As a result of this, Shakespeare studies, as known in the twenty-first century, could be said to have been founded in these years after World War I by those who sought to adapt Shakespeare to the times, and by those who introduced new notions of academic rigour and close reading of the texts; in effect, opening new areas of study and research to a wider constituency. If ever there had been a 'rule book' of Shakespeare criticism, it was now discarded.

Chapter two points not to any predicted end of Shakespeare studies, but to revised and reconstructed methods and attitudes. In this chapter, the notion of 'disintegration' was discussed, which the highly pessimistic, such as Sir Ernest Chambers, saw as possibly marking the beginning of the end of Shakespeare's cultural value. It is obvious however, that the disintegration thesis actually caused a revival of interest in Shakespeare studies by creating factions which, in clamouring for recognition of specific interests, raised awareness of Shakespeare to new levels. The chapter suggested three possible groupings, although attention is called to the fact that the arbitrary grouping of scholars and critics is not without risk, in that many would probably not have considered themselves able to be classified, and would almost certainly have resented it if they were. The first could be called 'The Traditionalists', best represented by the followers of A.C. Bradley or Walter Raleigh, who based their doctrines on enthusiasm for plot, history, character and biography,

largely ignoring the arguments on authorship and collaboration, except often by denial of them both. Although this group was occasionally singled out for mild derision, as with L.C. Knights' paper, 'How Many Children Had Lady Macbeth?', ridiculing Bradley's alleged preoccupation with character, its members continued to maintain respect at academic levels, a notion borne out by the fact that the works of Bradley *et al* were included in the schools and university curricula throughout the period, and that their books remained in print for general sale.

A second group, labelled perhaps a little fancifully as 'The Interpreters', such as Abercrombie and Dover Wilson, comprised those who sought to promote Shakespeare's canon whilst acknowledging that he was not necessarily the author of some scenes or lines, given the assumed custom and practice in Elizabethan and Jacobean times, of collaborative writing. As with the traditionalist group, this one celebrated Shakespeare whilst aware of the instability of the texts, a notion which had become acceptable to many in the period. Abercrombie's essay, 'A Plea for the Liberty of Interpreting', discussed in chapter two, in which he proposes the irrelevance of 'who wrote what', is an example of the general attitudes of this group, which was also populated by Robertson, Barker and G. Wilson Knight.

The third group could be called 'The Deconstructors', comprising Eliot, Empson, Knights *et al,* who valued the plays of Shakespeare as artefacts which could be examined and criticised dispassionately, with no reference to plot, history, character, collaboration or authorship. Freed of emotional impedimenta regarding the canon, the new writing of this group departed from the traditional to the scientific and the experimental, eventually also to form part of the curricula for study at universities. Textual analysis was to become a regular discipline in the process of literary studies.

The foregoing indicates a fragmentation in the doctrines which were followed by the various factions, not to the detriment of Shakespeare and the study or criticism of the canon, but quite the opposite. Chapter two suggested that a kind of attritional 'war' took place among the critics, academics and scholars of the period, when what in fact occurred was more of an evolutionary divergence on the approach to Shakespeare studies. J.L. Styan's Shakespeare 'revolution' did not take place because, whatever critical approach was adopted, Shakespeare, the name, or even the 'brand', was so entrenched and powerful that any form of attack was unlikely to have any penetrating or lasting effect. Chapter two discussed T.S. Eliot's view on the 'imperfections' in *Hamlet* which caused it, in his view, to 'fail as a work of art'; a statement which might be inferred as some kind of attack on Shakespeare by one of the most prominent critics of the times, thus giving support to the idea of 'revolution'. Eliot however, who never betrayed any subversive tendencies towards Shakespeare and his cultural value, would probably have thought that it unlikely that Shakespeare ever conceived of *Hamlet* as a 'work of art'. Eliot was more concerned with the philosophical question of what makes an artefact a work of art.

There were however, other issues which impinged upon the study of Shakespeare which exercised critics such as F.R. and Q.D. Leavis and I.A. Richards. F.R. Leavis, in *Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture,* demonstrated a pragmatic view that Shakespeare could be available for the consumption of all classes of society and most intellectual levels. Chapter one identified the mass market, the growth of mass culture and especially the rise of the bourgeoisie, as being anathema to the new Modernists and to such as the so-called 'Bloomsbury Group' and other self-appointed élites set on securing and protecting the intellectual high ground from fast-growing middle and lowbrow incursions into literature, drama and poetry.

This prompts the question: where does Shakespeare 'fit' in a society which is experiencing such radical changes, and where whole strata of intellectuals, academics and critics are apparently becoming estranged from the rest of society? This is a derivative of the question first posed in chapter one, which asks. 'Given the new environment, can Shakespeare exist in forms which suit both the intellectual *and* the mass consumer? Both questions are answered given the advantage of hindsight, but at the time, in an environment of immediate post-war upheaval, the options were not so clear. Options were however, becoming clearer, as the efforts of government, and other organisations, such as the English Association and the New Shakespere Society, began to influence not only the study of Shakespeare, but the study of English. Chapter three identified moves which were designed to upgrade the education system and so reinstall the notion of nationhood in a country which was recovering from a war of unprecedented casualty levels which affected all strata of society. Nervous politicians in the early 1920s were already seeing this as a contributory factor to a possible revolution or, more likely, a long period of unrest, something which was later manifested in the general strike of 1926 and the later Jarrow marches.

The Newbolt Report attempted to direct its recommendations towards too many strategic objectives, mainly because its brief was so vague. Its terms of reference allowed a wide sweep, not only on the teaching of English in primary, secondary and tertiary education, but also on the needs of business and on the relationship of English to other studies. Shakespeare, as well as Shelley, Keats, Byron, *et al*, inevitably was drawn into the orbit of the report, but it can be detected that the Committee, even with Dover Wilson as a member, had difficulty in placing Shakespeare within the system. A question which the committee failed to ask is that which was formulated in chapter one: 'Given the new [post-war] environment, can

Shakespeare exist in forms which suit intellectuals *and* the mass consumer?' A rider might be added which also asks whether the mass consumer actually wanted any involvement with a playwright who had been dead for 300 years and whose language was arcane. This was answered, up to a point, in chapter three, where evidence of editions aimed specifically at a wide audience demonstrated Shakespeare's potentially robust popular following. Newbolt identified the problems involved in the teaching of Shakespeare, but made no firm recommendations for the promotion of the works.

The promotion of Shakespeare in an age of change, modernism and Modernism, could not ignore the trends towards novelty and experiment demonstrated by the new writers of the century. In addition to this, Shakespeare was not only in competition with new writers, but also with his contemporaries, some of whose work was revived on stage in London after 300 years. Gary Taylor, in chapter two, made a claim that Shakespeare was in decline from 1900 to the present day, which in that instance was 1991. It is not clear whether or not Taylor's claim of decline is being applied to England or to the world but, as far as study and scholarship are concerned there appears to be no case in England for claiming any substantial decline. What could be claimed however is that there was a move to revision, reassessment, deconstruction and reassembly, areas which have proved fruitful as areas of research for succeeding generations of Shakespeare scholars and critics.

Shakespeare could not be promoted, specifically in this period, as a complete entity. There was disunity, or creative friction, which produced the factionalism of the 1920s, which persisted into the late 1930s, where the traditional and the modern became more estranged. A distrust of the traditional approaches to Shakespeare study and criticism, exemplified by especially the younger critics: Knights, Empson, and

Derek Traversi, permeated the new order of critics, in spite of the promotion by such media as the Newbolt Report, of the traditionalist writers. Traversi eventually wrote:

> Modern Shakespeare criticism presents a curious, not to say in some respects a contradictory picture. It is impossible not to feel, at this late date [1938] that the great tradition of the nineteenth century – running from Goethe and Coleridge to Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy* - long ago reached the limits of its usefulness…At the present day, most critics are prepared to admit the imperfect relevance of many of these attempts to apply methods akin to those of biography to Shakespeare's strictly dramatic creations.[211]

Traversi's use of the word 'usefulness' begs the question regarding which people would have found 'the great tradition of the nineteenth century' useful. Is Traversi implying that tradition, however 'great' it was, has nothing to teach, or that it should be entirely ignored? Traversi was seeking an 'end' to Shakespeare in the sense that previous criticism, up to and including Bradley, should be consigned to history, and that a new start was necessary to align Shakespeare with the modern thinkers who could elevate the study and criticism of Shakespeare to a position with which Traversi *et al* were intellectually attuned. This, of course, created a situation in which a national population which was enjoying new and unprecedented levels of literacy and availability of literature would develop into one where a minute proportion might hold the high intellectually experimental ground, whereas the overwhelming majority would be left to study Shakespeare as history, if they were to study Shakespeare at all.

This returns the argument to the points raised regarding the promotion of Shakespeare and the dichotomy of the traditional and the experimental. Chapter three identified some means by which the conflicting but parallel 'markets' for Shakespeare could be accommodated, specifically drawing attention to the new approaches to English literature at secondary and tertiary levels, and also to the divergent

[211] D.A. Traversi, *An Approach to Shakespeare* (London: Sands and Co., 1938), pp. 1-2.

approaches taken in the production of editions of Shakespeare which were targeted at differing audiences. If the argument of the three groupings is accepted, then it appears to follow that the study and criticism of Shakespeare during the period, subject as it was to the opportunities and threats of the times, was adapted and reformed to suit the emerging new markets. In other words, Shakespeare adapted and survived *because* of changes in society.

Performance

The implied impending 'end' of Shakespeare was a much more potent concept regarding performance on stage, especially if the comments of Oscar Asche and Sybil Thorndike, quoted in chapter four, are to be taken seriously, as it seems they were by the *Daily Express,* noted in the same chapter. A more sober view of the strengths and weaknesses of Shakespeare in performance, when viewed alongside the opportunities and threats to which it was also subject, might conclude that whilst all of the weaknesses impacted relentlessly, the strengths were not exercised sufficiently to cope with a changing market. Similarly, it can be seen that whilst the threats to Shakespeare throughout the period were always present, the opportunities were grasped only occasionally and then haphazardly on stage, in film and on radio. Reading chapter four, with the societal implications of demographic changes discussed in chapter one in mind, a synthesis of the four factors can be derived.

Tradition could be seen as both strength and a weakness simultaneously, depending upon factors of the background, education and experiences of the observer. A distrust of tradition however, tended to have a negative impact, particularly in the immediate post-war years, when statesmen, politicians and generals had come to be regarded not perhaps with suspicion, but almost certainly with less respect and

deference. If Shakespeare had, before the war, become a symbol of England and its traditions, then it is likely that the image of 'England's national poet' was tarnished. Tradition was in any case becoming an unfavoured abstraction when taking into account the decimation, or worse, of Britain's traditional industries such as textiles and shipbuilding, concomitant with the rise of new industries such as car manufacturing and household goods. Women's clothing and hair-styling in the immediate post war period, when compared to the Edwardian, is one of the more vivid demonstrations of a desire to overthrow the old and the traditional, an assertive fashion of short skirts, cloche hats, bobbed hair and bare arms, which did not evolve slowly but simply overwhelmed the prevailing fashions over a mere four years.

The London theatre moved towards the new and the experimental at the expense of the traditional and the historic. The popular theatre which overwhelmed the West End was however, not the sole province of younger writers such as Sherriff, Coward and Priestley. Shaw, Pinero and Galsworthy are shown in Schedule 4 as prominent, with new plays dominating the West End, particularly in the 1920s. At the time, Shaw and Pinero were in their sixties, whilst Galsworthy was fifty-three in 1920, but they were producing plays which were new and relevant to the times, as were others who wrote of the aftermath of war, unemployment, declining aristocracies, drugs and new notions of morality.

The changing fashions of the theatre were recognised by those who also eschewed the traditional in favour of the new, exemplified later in the period by Hugh Beaumont who, along with fellow entrepreneurs, adopted the principle of giving the public what they *apparently* wanted, rather than producing plays which were considered good for them. Chapter four provokes two separate and conflicting conclusions: one, that the public was tired of Shakespeare, dismissed as arcane and

irrelevant; the other, that a small but significant niche market existed for Shakespeare's plays, and that the exploitation of this market was due. It was clear that the latter conclusion should prevail in view of the persistence of Shakespeare on stage, in spite of the threats from the popular commercial stage.

Thus, the continuation of Shakespeare was guaranteed, in spite of, or perhaps because of the fashions of the times, via three specific factors. The first of these was the promotion of the traditional, exemplified by the Old Vic, the second was the new concept of light-heartedness and novelty – the picnic-baskets and the tourists at the Open Air. The third factor was the rise of the 'star' actors, particularly after the introduction of talking-pictures. Laurence Olivier is an example of an actor who moved between the media of stage and film to the advantage of both, and although never starring in a 'Shakespeare film' of the period, was able to influence the London stage through his fame gained in Hollywood.

Continuing with the notional matrix of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats concerning Shakespeare in performance, talking pictures provided an ideal opportunity to present Shakespeare to a wider audience, whereas the cinema itself, the building, represented a threat. This paradox can be interpreted from Schedule 7, and the discussion in chapter four on Reinhardt's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which demonstrates the critical and financial failure of Shakespeare on film from 1928 to 1939. The Hollywood output of films from 1930 onwards was governed by two main principles: the first being that every film should have a recognised 'star', or preferably two, who were, equally recognisably, properly cast in roles which were suited to their appearance and reputation. The second, that a film should run for a preferred time of an hour and a half, and no more than two hours, an edict which was followed faithfully until *Gone with the Wind* in 1939. Financially successful films of the thirties,

such as *The Dawn Patrol* (1938), *Hell's Angels* (1930), *Flying down to Rio* (1933) and *Snow White* (1937) averaged ninety minutes and were all 'star vehicles'. Reinhardt's *Dream,* with an abundance of stars, who were mostly miscast, ran for 111 minutes, a large proportion of which was given to set-piece dance spectaculars, necessitating severe editing of the text. As chapter four shows, the *Dream* failed on both counts, and, as a consequence of this, coupled with the equally poor returns on *The Taming of the Shrew,* Shakespeare was avoided by the Hollywood producers until after World War II, Olivier's *Henry V* of 1944 being a British production.

The question of the advisability, practicability or even the possibility of producing Shakespeare successfully on film was to concern film-makers thereafter. Even the successful Olivier version of *Hamlet* in 1948, with much cutting of the text and moderating of the action, bore with it a caveat from its director and star:

> I feel that the film *Hamlet* should be regarded as an essay in *Hamlet,* and not as a film version of a necessarily abridged classic.[212]

Olivier recognised that the film-going public, as opposed to the theatre-going, who often attended both, had no wish to see Shakespeare on screen, but rather a version of it which was within their intellectual grasp and area of comfort. Producers heeded this notion up until Kenneth Branagh's 232 minute 'unabridged' *Hamlet* of 1996, which received mixed critical reviews, and failed at the mainstream box-office, however much Shakespeare students and other enthusiasts may have enjoyed it.

The paradox above is based upon the notion that whilst opportunity existed for wider dissemination of Shakespeare's plays via the medium of film, the cinema could be said to have reduced its likelihood. The whole system of marketing of films was closely allied to the marketing aims of the picture houses, that is to provide for the

[212] Brenda Cross, ed., *The Film 'Hamlet': A Record of its Production* (London: Saturn Press, 1948), p. 12.

mass audience a sense of luxury, comfort and, perhaps above all, escapism. It was hardly likely that the customers who were targeted to populate the brand-new Odeons and Gaumonts would prefer Shakespeare when they could see the stars in gangster, musical or historical fantasy films about which they had read in the popular press or in new magazines which were specially devoted to the film industry. Thus the marketing of popular theatre in London and some of the larger cities, coupled with the national marketing power of the film industry, a 'franchise' for Shakespeare could not properly be designed. The question of developing this supposed franchise was not to be addressed until after World War II, with the founding of the Arts Council in 1946, and with a new notion of a 'national theatre', when it was recognised that subsidy and sponsorship of the arts were important, if not the only ways of guaranteeing their survival.

Thus it was that visual Shakespeare, by the end of the period, was left largely to the enthusiasts at the Old Vic, the party-goers and tourists at the Open Air Theatre, and the 'institution' as Dover Wilson called it, of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford upon Avon which retained the word 'Memorial' until 1961. The word tends to identify a marketing mind-set which such as Beaumont in the theatre of the thirties, and the moguls of the film industry would presumably have found highly restricting; the association of the word 'memorial' with the word 'dead', being rather obvious. Even so, as acknowledged earlier, and as shown in the appropriate schedules, the stage could still draw large and loyal audiences to individual productions of the more popular plays, particularly if a new 'star' actor or actress were involved. The adoption of new stage design and directing techniques involving such as performances in modern dress, simplified sets or the faster delivery of speech,

identified a path for others to follow and, if achieving nothing else, provided the theatre of Shakespeare with controversy and interest.

In this period in particular, the differences in professional approach to the stage and the cinema is underlined in the usage of the word 'industry' in the case of film, as in 'film industry', against the absence of any mention anywhere of the 'theatre industry'. Motion pictures, and eventually the 'talkies' were viewed as industries from the outset. This generated among the film makers and distributors some specific production and marketing strategies which were invariably consumer-led. In spite of the efforts of Hugh Beaumont *et al*, the theatre could not be co-ordinated as a mass-market medium, given its fragmented nature and its disparate infrastructure. The main focus of the leaders of the film industry was customer traffic and the box-office. The theatre was slow to react to changing markets and was, for the most part, particularly regarding 'classical' theatre, led by enthusiasts whose marketing acumen generally abjured the notion of , as Beaumont put it, 'giving the customer what they want'. If anything were to signify the wide financial, marketing and operational disparities between theatre and film it remains the usage of 'the film industry' versus 'the theatre'; the former having no tradition, the latter perhaps over-endowed with it.

As far as radio is concerned, in the hands of a state sponsor, no profit motive or audience measurement existed. Schedule 6 demonstrates a confused approach to Shakespeare by the BBC. It took the Corporation/Company from 1922 until 1936 to initiate any formal market research of audience habits and wishes. That which was carried out depended heavily on anecdote rather than properly collected data. Reith's stricture that radio must 'educate, inform, entertain', left the producers of Shakespeare

on radio with problems of putting plays of two hours duration or longer into restricted schedules on a limited number of frequencies.

These problems are compounded by the fact that the mass audiences which radio attracted were not, in their main constituency, used to theatre-going; sitting still, without speaking, for long periods, something which plays on radio demanded. If they could eventually do so after the advent of talking pictures, it is argued that the visual element placed the need for concentration at a relatively low level to those who heard a play on radio. The advent of the new medium, the biggest mass impact of communications technology since the invention of the printing press, and certainly farther reaching in the short term, required a discipline to which the generation who experienced the early days of radio, had never been subjected. Accordingly, the producers and schedulers at the BBC recognised that the half-hour 'slot' was the ideal in the matter of retaining concentration and interest, and that anything of more than one hour's duration was unlikely to succeed in entertaining, educating or informing. This, as with the case of the film industry, put the producers of Shakespeare into a difficult position. The aim of the BBC to broadcast the entire Shakespeare canon was never realised because of the restrictions imposed on its franchise concerning band-width availability, with its concomitant scheduling problems, and anecdotal reports of listener alienation.

End Note

The study and consumption of Shakespeare between 1919 and 1939 reached a turning point where decisive changes were made in response to social, political and technological pressures. Shakespeare's status as England's historical cultural symbol was tested throughout the period from many quarters, but emerged, on the eve of

another World War, reformed but intact, with no palpable challenger or replacement. A distrust of tradition in the 1920s, re-emerging in the late 1930s as war threatened once more, was inevitable, given the social, demographical and industrial circumstances. This distrust impacted upon the arts, as well as in political and social forums. The tradition of Shakespeare was not so much distrusted, as reviewed and revised. In the area of study and scholarship this was manifested by a less reverential and more analytical approach, whilst in performance by a less traditional and more experimental one. The main factors which positively affected the study and criticism of Shakespeare by generating higher levels of interest may be summarised as: the growing awareness of and interest in the perceived textual instabilities, the debates on authorship and collaboration, the rising status of the English language and Literature and their promotion by government and educational establishments.

Shakespeare in performance on stage was positively affected by the embracing of new production and directing techniques, and by the intervention of new actor-leaders and producers. Negative effects may be summarised as the adoption of modern playwrights by the controllers of the new commercial theatre, and a perceived out-datedness of Shakespeare, coupled with the new audiences' desire for novel and identifiably relevant productions. On radio, Shakespeare was presented enthusiastically but was scheduled and edited in a medium with a strategy too wide for the restricted technological possibilities of the time. On film, the investors controlling the medium considered, after venturing into productions of Shakespeare, that it would not suit that medium at that time. The over-riding influence between the wars was the rise of the middle classes and the concomitant general acceptability of a middle brow culture which created new markets in publishing, show-business and the rest of the leisure industry. This meant that disposable time and income were directed

into many diverse and many new streams which in turn meant that some of the more traditional markets were either compressed or destroyed.

SCHEDULE 1

THE 'LONDON STAGE' 1919 – 1939

Theatre	Seating	Address/Area
Adelphi, 1886 (As 'Sans Pareil')	1522	Stockwell Rd., Lambeth.
Aldwych, 1905.	1028	Westminster.
Ambassador's, 1913 (Now 'New Amb')	453	West St., Camden.
Apollo, 1901.	893	Shaftesbury Avenue.
Art's, 1927	339	Gt. Newport St.
Cambridge, 1930	1305	Seven Dials.
Casino, 1930. (Later, Prince Edward)	1800	Old Compton St.
Coliseum, 1904. (as London Coliseum).	2558	St. Martin's Lane.
Comedy, 1881.	828	Panton St.
Court, 1888. (Later Royal Court)	439	Sloane Square.
Covent Garden. (Later Theatre Royal C.G.)	2190	Covent Garden.
Criterion, 1874.	660	Piccadilly Circus.
Dominion, 1929.	2800	Tottenham Court Rd.
Drury Lane, 1812. (3 Rebuilds)	3060	Catherine St.
Duchess, 1929.	491	Catherine St.
Duke of York's, 1892. (As 'Trafalgar Sq'.)	800	St. Martin's Lane.
Fortune, 1924.	464	Russell St.
Garrick, 1889.	800	Charing Cross Rd.
Globe, 1906.	907	Shaftesbury Avenue.
Haymarket, 1720. (Rebuilt 1821)	880	Haymarket.
His Majesty's, 1897. (As 'Her Majesty's)	1280	Haymarket.
Kingsway, 1907. (Destroyed by bombing)	c.500	Queen St., Holborn.
London Hippodrome, 1900.	1340	Cranbourne St.
London Pavilion, 1918.	1080	Piccadilly Circus.
Lyceum, 1765>1904. (Many rebuilds)	2814	Wellington St.
Lyric, 1888	944	Shaftesbury Avenue.
Lyric, 1890.	755	Hammersmith.
New, 1903.	958	Drury Lane.

Old Vic, 1818.	1003	The Cut, Lambeth.
Open Air, 1933.	3000	Regent's Park.
Palace, 1891. (As Royal English Opera Hse.)	1400	Shaftesbury Avenue.
Palladium, 1910. (Later London Palladium)	2338	Argyll St.
Piccadilly, 1928.	1132	Denman St.
Playhouse, 1907.	769	Northumberland Avenue.
Prince of Wales's, 1884.	1126	Coventry St.
Prince's, 1911.	1450	Holborn.
Queen's, 1907.	1038	Shaftesbury Avenue.
Royalty, 1911.	2420	Kingsway.
Sadler's Wells, 1765.	1548	Islington.
St. Martin's, 1916.	550	West St., Camden.
Saville, 1931.	1200	Shaftesbury Avenue.
Savoy, 1881. (Rebuilt,1929).	1130	Strand.
Scala, 1905.	1111	Charlotte St.
Strand, 1905.	900	Aldwych.
Theatre Royal, Stratford East, 1884.	487	Gerry Raffles Square.
Vaudeville, 1870.	668	Strand.
Victoria Palace, 1911.	1552	Victoria St.
Westminster, 1931.	660	Palace St.
Whitehall, 1930.	632	Whitehall.
Windmill, 1931.	322	Gt. Windmill St.
Winter Garden, 1919.	1581	Drury Lane.
Wyndham's, 1899.	769	Charing Cross Rd.

SCHEDULE 2

THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE ON THE LONDON STAGE 1920 – 1939

(The first two digits of the reference number denote the year)

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/DirTheatre	
21.324	All's Well That Ends Well	10	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
32.415		4	Robert Atkins	Arts
22.322	Anthony and Cleopatra	12	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.364		14	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
30.387		18	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic
34.264		28	Henry Cass	Old Vic
36.307		5	Komisarjevsky	New
20.123	As You Like It	45	Nigel Playfair	Lyric Hammersmith
20.323		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
21.260		17	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.35		1	Acton Bond	Haymarket (Reading)
23.274		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.237		8	Robert Atkins	New Oxford
24.264		1	RL	Regent
26.44		14	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
28.362		23	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
30.44		9	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic
32.381		21	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
33.202		21	Robert Atkins	Open Air
33.327		8	Maurice Colbourne	Phoenix
34.147		13	Robert Atkins	Open Air
35.244		18	Robert Atkins	Open Air
36.234		29	Robert Atkins	Open Air
36.338		28	Esmé Church	Old Vic
37.40		36	Esmé Church	New
38.216		18	Robert Atkins	Open Air
38.329		1(7)	Baliol Holloway	Adelphi
20.408	Comedy of Errors	13	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.110		5	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.121		1	Philip Cathie	New
23.131		1	Robert Atkins	Strand
24.288		8	Henry Baynton	Savoy
27.77		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
30.192		1	Stella Welchman	Haymarket
34.185		16	Maxwell Wray	Open Air
37.275		18	Robert Atkins	Open Air

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
20.114	Coriolanus	6	Thorndike/Warburton	Old Vic
24.117		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
28.289		1	Robert Atkins	Haymarket (Reading)
38.66		35	Lewis Casson	Old Vic
23.221	Cymbeline	21	Lewis Casson	New
32.344		21	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
20.26	Hamlet	8	Benson?	St Martin's
20.44		11	Thorndike	Old Vic
20.212		1	Bond	Strand (Reading)
20.404		1	Henry Baynton/Page	Savoy
21.63		10	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.6		4	Henry Baynton?	Savoy
22.117		8	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.84		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.144		14	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.248		8	Robert Atkins	New Oxford
25.54		68	Barrymore	Haymarket
25.112		14	Milton?	Old Vic
25.157		2	L E Berman	Prince of Wales
25.230		86	Barry Jackson	Kingsway
26.88		5	Montegiglio?	Globe
26.90		1	Ben Greet	Lyceum
26.116		2	Jackson	Court
27.96		10	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
27.112		1	Robert Atkins	Haymarket (Reading)
28.154		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
29.121		2	Ben Greet	Arts
29.139		6	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
30.45		22	Peter Godfrey	Court
30.133		2	Charles la Trobe	Haymarket
30.140		7	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic
30.185		37	Harcourt Williams	Queen's
30.199		8	Maurice Brown?	Globe
31.76		35	Charles la Trobe	Haymarket
32.126		18	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
32.133		2	Peter Dearing	Kingsway
33.130		1	Ben Greet	Arts
34.111		2	Ben Greet	Sadler's Wells
34.332		155	John Gielgud	New
35.146		21	Henry Cass	Old Vic
35.223		8	Hilton Edwards	Westminster
36.68		15	Arthur Phillips	Lyric Hammersmith
37.2		42	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
37.249		14	Michael MacOwan	Westminster
38.11		2	W G Fay	Arts
38.277		42	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
39.166	Hamlet	2	D Rondiris	His Majesty's
39.179		6	John Gielgud	Lyceum
20.138	Henry IV Pt 1	5	Thorndike	Old Vic
22.243		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.364		1	Howard Rose	Haymarket (Reading)
30.297		15	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic
35.86		87	Robert Atkins	His Majesty's
20.158	Henry IV Pt 2	6	Thorndike	Old Vic
21.43		62	J B Fagan	Court
22.289		12	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.23	(½)	9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.32	(2nd ½ Pt 2 & 3)	9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.369		1	Gordon Bailey	Haymarket (Reading)
25.37		1	L E Berman	Regent
35.110		21	Henry Cass	Old Vic
20.298	Henry V	24	W Bridges-Adams	Strand
21.106		1	Lewis/Woolfe	Strand
21.292		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.247		13	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.169		1	Howard Rose	Strand (Reading)
26.289		15	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
28.11		32	Andrew Leigh	Lyric Hammersmith
29.359		1	Robert Atkins	Haymarket (Reading)
31.498		24	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
34.16		25	Stanley Bell	Alhambra
37.104		50	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
38.252		18	Lewis Casson	Drury Lane
24.31	Henry VIII	9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.396		127	Lewis Casson	Empire
27.30		1	Edith Craig	Haymarket (Reading)
29.102		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
33.328		28	Tyrone Guthrie	Sadler's Wells/Old Vic
36.210		20	Robert Atkins	Open Air
20.8	Julius Caesar	83	Stanley Bell	St James's
20.22		10	Russell Thorndike	Old Vic
21.9		4	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.17		1	?	Savoy
22.87		1	?	Haymarket (Reading)
22.299		6	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
26.26		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
30.17		13	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic
32.21		23	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
32.36		64	Oscar Asche	His Majesty's

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
34.46	Julius Caesar	24	Stanley Bell	Alhambra
35.376		24	Henry Cass	Old Vic
37.236		18	Robert Atkins	Open Air
39.282		12	Henry Cass	His Majesty's
20.302	King John	12	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
21.95		1	Acton Bond	Haymarket (Reading)
24.372		1	Stanley Drewitt	Strand
26.240		17	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
31.362		28	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
20.356	King Lear	9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.9		2	Baynton?	Savoy
22.76		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.125		2	Alan Wade	Regent
28.79		1	R E Webber?	Haymarket (Reading)
28.200		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
31.146		20	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
34.300		16	Hugh Hunt	Westminster
36.88		27	Henry Cass	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
23.226	Love's Labours Lost	13	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.96		1	George R Foss	Apollo
28.316		15	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
30.85		1	Robert Atkins	Haymarket
32.151		22	Tyrone Guthrie	Westminster
35.294		9	Robert Atkins	Open Air
36.245		10	Robert Atkins	Open Air
36.257		22	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
20.320	Macbeth	30	Louis Calvert	Aldwych
21.155		1	Acton Bond	Haymarket (Reading)
21.276		14	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.64		1	Ernest Milton	Strand
25.78		17	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
26.350		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
26.387		74	Lewis Casson	Prince's
28.42		32	H K Ayliffe	Court
29.10		18	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
29.70		1	Robert Atkins	Haymarket (Reading)
30.91		16	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic
32.124		4	Peter Dearing	Kingsway
32.407		21	Williams/Carrick	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
34.90		29	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
35.395		32	Arthur Jennings	Lyric Hammersmith
35.423		18	Henry Cass	Old Vic
37.377		53	Michael Saint-Denis	Old Vic/New
39.115		1	Robert Atkins	Winter Garden

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
24.135	Measure for Measure	1	Andrew Leigh	Strand
25.341		9	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
29.135		1	Robert Atkins	Haymarket
31.306		32	Robert Atkins	Fortune
33.358		18	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
37.319		23	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
20.15	Merchant of Venice	10	Russell Thorndike	Old Vic
20.299		10	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.2		4	?	Savoy
22.4		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.312		32	Sir Frank Benson	Duke of York's
23.13		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.132		8	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.248		17	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
27.155		2	L E Berman	Apollo
27.284		48	Andrew Leigh	Lyric Hammersmith
28.84		5	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
29.309		8	E Lyall Swete	Little
29.331		18	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic
32.128		3	Peter Dearing	Kingsway
32.142		27	Henry Oscar	St James's
32.443		24	John Gielgud	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
34.78		31	Stanley Bell	Alhambra
35.334		24	J Fisher White	Lyric Hammersmith
38.71		60	Gielgud/Byam Shaw	Queen's
22.236	Merry Wives of Windsor	19	Robert Akins	Old Vic
23.292		54	W Bridges-Adams	Lyric Hammersmith
24.400		1	Hubert Hine?	Regent
25.401		12	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
29.53		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
29.274		10	Oscar Asche	Haymarket
31.521		31	Baliol Holloway	Duchess
32.471		18	Oscar Asche	Winter Garden
37.198		9	Robert Atkins	Open Air
20.32	Midsummer Night's Dream	13	Russell Thorndike	Old Vic
20.364		93	J B Fagan	Court
21.13		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.92		10	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.261		23	Donald Calthrop	Kingsway
24.378		19	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.420		96	Basil Dean	Drury Lane
26.265		14	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
26.375		28	J Wallett-Waller?	Winter Garden
27.304		1	Charles Maynard?	Adelphi
29.423		20	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
31.463	Midsummer Night's Dream	34	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
33.228		87	Robert Atkins	Open Air
34.197		41	Robert Atkins	Open Air
35.275		36	Robert Atkins	Open Air
36.236		35	Robert Atkins	Open Air
37.213		18	Robert Atkins	Open Air
37.442		50	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
38.150		27	Robert Atkins	Open Air
38.379		33	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
39.185		32	Robert Atkins	Open Air
21.233	Much Ado About Nothing	15	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.331		1	Beatrice Wilson	Strand
25.38		12	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
26.19		36	W Bridges Adams	New
26.109		14	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
27.329		32	Andrew Leigh	Lyric Hammersmith
28.418		1	Beatrice Wilson	Royalty (Reading)
31.99		36	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
34.322		21	Henry Cass	Old Vic
39.142		24	Robert Atkins	Open Air
20.38	Othello	15	Matheson Lang	New
20.84		8	Russell Thorndike	Old Vic
21.102		68	J B Fagan	Court
22.18		1	Henry Baynton	Savoy
22.34		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.358		18	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.384		1	L E Berman	Prince's
27.58		14	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
27.82		2	A E Filmer	Apollo
30.175		55	Ellen van Vokenburg	Savoy
31.465		6	Michael Orme?	Arts
32.80		20	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
32.111		7	Ernest Milton	St James's
35.13		21	Henry Cass	Old Vic
35.172		23	Hugh Hunt	Westminster
38.19		35	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
21.118	Pericles	7	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
26.54		1	Terence O'Brien	Scala
39.167		14	Robert Atkins	Open Air
21.94	Richard II	9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.13		14	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.229		4	Henry Baynton	Savoy
26.25		1	Ben Webster	Regent
29.384		18	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
30.373	Richard II	20	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
34.305		33	Henry Cass	Old Vic
36.39		23	Arthur Phillips	Lyric Hammersmith
37.227		80	John Gielgud	Queen's
21.94	Richard III	8	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.48		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.273		1	Baliol Holloway	Regent
25.290		14	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
26.365		1	Gwendolyn Russer	Haymarket (Reading)
27.14		14	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
30.288		62	Baliol Holloway	New/Price of Wales's
34.210		7	Leontine Sagan	Open Air
36.15		20	Henry Cass	Old Vic
27.343		23	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
20.333	Romeo and Juliet	18	Norman McDermott	Everyman
21.31		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.24		1	Edward Dunstan?	Savoy
23.62		1	Acton Bond	Strand (RDG)
24.175		60	H K Ayliff	Regent
26.79		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
26.369		2	George R Foss	Strand
28.57		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
29.298		15	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic
32.132		2	Peter Dearing	Kingsway
33.77		21	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
34.249		7	Robert Atkins	Open Air
35.368		186	John Gielgud	New
20.9	Taming of the Shrew	8	Russell Thorndike	Old Vic
20.380		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.26		1	Henry Baynton?	Savoy
22.265		12	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.216		8	Robert Atkins	New Oxford
25.318		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
26.260		4	Ben Greet	Apollo
27.248		66	Andrew Leigh	Lyric (OVC)
28.162		32	H K Ayliff	Court
31.442		5	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
32.130		2	Peter Dearing	Kingsway
35.1		21	Henry Cass	Sadler's Wells
37.95		49	Claud Gurney	New
39.72		33	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
20.309	The Tempest	1	Acton Bond?	Haymarket (Reading)
21.24		46	Louis Calvert	Aldwych
21.47		12	Robert Atkins	Old Vic

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
22.120	The Tempest	3	L A Collingwood?	Old Vic
23.122		3	J B Fagan	Scala
24.56		10	Leslie Faber	Old Vic
26.1		2	Henry Baynton	Savoy
26.309		14	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
30.330		23	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
33.125		21	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
33.255		26	Robert Atkins	Open Air
34.6		30	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
34.177		26	Robert Atkins	Open Air
36.225		16	Robert Atkins	Open Air
36.268		18	Robert Atkins	Open Air
38.176		18	Robert Atkins	Open Air
20.182	Timon of Athens	1	Acton Bond	Haymarket (Reading)
22.133		4	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
35.407		23	Nugent Monck	Westminster
23.238	Titus Andronicus	9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.189	Troilus and Cressida	7	Frank Birch	Everyman (CUMDS)
23.257		10	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
38.256		29	Michael MacOwan	Westminster
20.329	Twelfth Night	17	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.46		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
22.345		12	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
23.74		10	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.255		60	Donald Calthrop	Kingsway
24.170		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
24.257		8	Robert Atkins	New Oxford
25.144		9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.317		1	?	New Scala
27.1		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
27.126		2	Robert Atkins	St James's
28.390		17	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
31.5		3	Michael Tchechov	Phoenix
31.6		28	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
32.103		22	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
32.131		2	Peter Dearing	Kingsway
32.179		130	Robert Atkins	New
33.186		17	Robert Atkins	Open Air
33.261		21	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
34.153		6	Robert Atkins	Open Air
35.225		17	Robert Atkins	Open Air
36.247		5	Robert Atkins	Open Air
37.65		42	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
37.265		9	Robert Atkins	Open Air

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
38.29	Twelfth Night	1	Robert Atkins	His Majesty's
38.192		12	Robert Atkins	Open Air
38.348		41	Michel Saint Denis	Phoenix
39.191		22	Robert Atkins	Open Air
23.266	Two Gentlemen of Verona	9	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
25.266		1	Robert Atkins	Apollo
28.97	The Two Noble Kinsmen	9	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
20.284	The Winter's Tale	12	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
23.230		1	Ben Greet	Lyric Hammersmith
25.59		15	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
27.41		13	Andrew Leigh	Old Vic
27.300		1	Ben Greet	Princes
33.19		21	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic/Sadler's Wells
36.74		21	Michael MacOwan	Old Vic
37.263		18	Robert Atkins	Open Air

SCHEDULE 2a

Shakespeare on the London Stage 1920-1939

	1920-1929		1930-1939	
	Pr	Perf	Pr	Perf
Henry VI Part One	3	11	0	0
Henry VI Part Two	3	9	0	0
Henry VI Part Three	1	9	0	0
Richard III	6	47	4	112
Titus Andronicus	1	9	0	0
Comedy of Errors	6	41	3	35
Taming of the Shrew	9	153	5	110
Two Gentlemen of Verona	2	10	0	0
Love's Labours Lost	3	29	5	64
King John	4	31	1	28
Richard II	5	45	4	156
Romeo and Juliet	10	132	4	216
Midsummer Night's Dream	11	326	10	443
Merchant of Venice	13	180	6	169
Henry IV Part One	3	15	2	102
Henry IV Part Two	4	81	1	21
Merry Wives of Windsor	6	109	3	58
Much Ado About Nothing	7	111	3	81
As You Like It	9	127	11	208
Henry V	8	96	4	117
Julius Caesar	8	118	7	174
Twelfth Night	12	167	16	378
Hamlet	22	283	20	441
Troilus and Cressida	2	17	1	29
All's Well That Ends Well	1	10	1	4
Measure for Measure	4	11	3	73
Othello	9	136	7	167
King Lear	6	36	3	63
Macbeth	10	201	9	164
Antony and Cleopatra	2	26	3	51
Timon of Athens	2	5	1	23
Coriolanus	3	16	1	35
Pericles	2	8	1	14
Cymbeline	1	21	1	21
Winter's Tale	5	42	3	60
Tempest	8	91	8	178
King Henry VIII	4	150	2	48
Two Noble Kinsmen	1	9	0	0
	216	2918	153	3843

SCHEDULE 3

PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE AT THE BIRMINGHAM REPERTORY THEATRE 1919-1939

	All Prods.	S'peare	Plays	Ratio
1919	20	5	Twelfth Night. Much Ado. As You Like It. Merchant of Venice. Loves Labour's Lost.	25.0%
1920	20	5	Othello. Much Ado. Henry IV Pt 1. Love's Labours Lost. Merry Wives.	25.0%
1921	25	2	Henry IV Pts. 1 and 2.	18.0%
1922	19	2	Twelfth Night. Romeo and Juliet	10.5%
1923	28	1	Cymbeline	3.6%
1924	8*	1	Two Gentlemen of Verona	12.5%
1925	18	2	Love's Labour's Lost. Hamlet.	11.0%
1926	12	0		-
1927	19	1	All's Well That Ends Well.	5.2%
1928	16	2	Macbeth. Taming of the Shrew.	12.5%
1929	18	1	Othello	5.5%
1930	19	0		-
1931	24	0		-
1932	13	0		-
1933	14	0		-
1934	14	0		-
1935	17	1	Hamlet	5.9%
1936	16	1	Midsummer Night's Dream	6.3%
1937	15	0		-
1938	18	0		-
1939	15	0		-

* Re-opened on 27th September after seven months closure.

SCHEDULE 4

THE PLAYS OF SELECTED WRITERS ON THE LONDON STAGE 1920 – 1939

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW				
20.34	Pygmalion	78		Aldwych
20.83	Dark Lady of the Sonnets	1	Hector Abbas	Lyric Hammersmith
20.144	Pygmalion	24	Violet Melnotte	Duke of Yorks
20.289	You Never Can Tell	20		Everyman
20.341	You Never Can Tell	9	Louis Calvert	Garrick
20.391	O'Flaherty V.C.	2		Lyric, Hammersmith
21.12	You Never Can Tell	8	Edith Craig	Everyman
21.30	Candida	14	Edith Craig	Everyman
21.44	Great Catherine	1		Shaftesbury
21.46	The Doctor's Dilemma	28	Edith Craig	Everyman
21.68	How He Lied To Her Husband	19	Edith Craig	Everyman
21.70	The Shewing Up of Blanco Posnes	19	Edith Craig	Everyman
21.99	Major Barbara	28	Edith Craig	Everyman
21.128	Man and Superman	23	Edith Craig	Everyman
21.210	Dark Lady of the Sonnets	29	Edith Craig	Queen's
21.212	The Shewing Up of Blanco Posnes	29	Edith Craig	Queen's
21.230	John Bull's Other Island	43	Allan Wade	Court
21.263	Heartbreak House	63	J.B. Fagan	Court
22.33	Fanny's First Play	28	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
22.59	Arms and the Man	21	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
22.84	Getting Married	21	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
22.112	Misalliance	22	Milton Rosmer	Everyman
22.150	You Never Can Tell	20	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
22.208	Candida	14	Douglas Jefferies	Everyman
22.228	Widower's Houses	1	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
23.22	The Philanderer	21	Milton Rosmer	Everyman
23.73	The Doctor's Dilemma	28	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
23.121	Major Barbara	21		Everyman
23.153	Candida	21	Harold Scott	Everyman
23.181	Fanny's First Play	21	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
23.219	Dark Lady of the Sonnets	40	Harcourt Williams	Kingsway
24.70	Back to Methuselah Pt I	4	H.K. Ayliff	Court
24.73	Back to Methuselah Pt II	4	H.K. Ayliff	Court
24.75	Back to Methuselah Pt III	4	H.K. Ayliff	Court
24.77	Back to Methuselah Pt IV	1	H.K. Ayliff	Court
24.79	Back to Methuselah Pt V	4	H.K. Ayliff	Court
24.120	St Joan	244	Lewis Casson	New
24.227	The Man of Destiny	13	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
24.228	Augustus Does His Bit	13	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
24.267	Getting Married	33	Norman MacDermott	Everyman

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW				
24.285	The Man of Destiny	15	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
24.286	How He Lied to Her Husband	15	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
24.297	Back to Methuselah Pt I	4	H.K. Ayliff	Court
24.305	Back to Methuselah Pt V	4	H.K. Ayliff	Court
24.328	The Devil's Disciple	26	Norman MacDermott	Everyman
24.333	Fanny's First Play	2	Charles Macdona	Regent
24.335	Pygmalion	2	Charles Macdona	Regent
24.337	Candida	1	Charles Macdona	Regent
24.340	Dark Lady of the Sonnets	2	Charles Macdona	Regent
24.342	How He Lied to Her Husband	2	Charles Macdona	Regent
24.344	Arms and the Man	1	Charles Macdona	Regent
24.345	The Devil's Disciple	1	Charles Macdona	Regent
24.346	You Never Can Tell	1	Charles Macdona	Regent
24.347	The Doctor's Dilemma	1	Charles Macdona	Regent
24.360	Misalliance	14	Norman McDermott	Everyman
24.415	The Philanderer	18	Milton Rosmer	Everyman
25.7	St Joan	132		Regent
25.108	Caesar and Cleopatra	78	H.K. Ayliff	Kingsway
25.241	Pygmalion	18	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.247	You Never Can Tell	9	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.251	Man and Superman	7	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.255	Getting Married	9	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.257	The Doctor's Dilemma	16	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.265	Arms and the Man	8	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.274	Mrs Warren's Profession	21	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.284	Fanny's First Play	8	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.295	Candida	5	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.305	Major Barbara	3	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.315	Man and Superman	5	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.327	The Devil's Disciple	6	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.365	Overruled	4	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.402	The Shewing Up of Blanco Posnes	42	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
25.403	Androcles and the Lion	42	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
26.15	The Man of Destiny	7	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
26.27	John Bull's Other Island	19	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
26.47	Mrs Warren's Profession	68	S. Esmé Percy	Regent
26.64	St Joan	53	S. Esmé Percy	Lyceum
26.122	Back to Methuselah Pt I	1		Court
26.222	Widower's Houses	16	George Carr	Everyman
26.251	Arms and the Man	19	George Carr	Everyman
26.329	The Doctor's Dilemma	37	S. Esmé Percy	Kingsway
27.8	Pygmalion	25	S. Esmé Percy	Kingsway
27.34	Man and Superman	44	S. Esmé Percy	Kingsway
27.223	Overrules	19	Malcolm Morley	Everyman
27.327	The Glimpse of Reality	4	Maurice Brown	Arts
27.345	Getting Married	24	S. Esmé Percy	Little

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW				
27.348	Getting Back to Methuselah Pt I	1	H K Ayliff	Wyndham's
27.375	You Never Can Tell	26	S. Esmé Percy	Little
28.10	Man and Superman	27	S. Esmé Percy	Little → Garrick
28.23	The Fascinating Foundling	4	Henry Oscar	Arts
28.44	Mrs Warren's Profession	7	S. Esmé Percy	Little
28.82	Back to Methuselah Pt 1	10	H K Ayliff	Court
28.83	Back to Methuselah Pt II	9	H K Ayliff	Court
28.94	Back to Methuselah Pt III	9	H K Ayliff	Court
28.95	Back to Methuselah Pt IV	9	H K Ayliff	Court
28.105	Back to Methuselah Pt V	11	H K Ayliff	Court
29.66	Major Barbara	63	H K Ayliff	Wyndham's
29.303	The Apple Cart	285	H K Ayliff	Queen's
29.372	Captain Brassbound's Conversion	12	Tristan Rawson	Everyman
29.441	Arms and the Man	23	S. Esmé Percy	Court
29.451	Pygmalion	8	S. Esmé Percy	Court
30.3	Man and Superman	23	S. Esmé Percy	Court
30.12	The Doctor's Dilemma	8	S. Esmé Percy	Court
30.15	The Philanderer	8	S. Esmé Percy	Court
30.62	Androcles and the Lion	23	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic
30.63	The Dark Lady of the Sonnets	23	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic
30.89	Misalliance	47	S. Esmé Percy	Court
30.207	Sainte Jeanne (Trans)	11	Globe	
30.235	Annajanska	26	Ernest Milton	Grafton
30.289	The Devil's Disciple	51	Martin Harvey	Savoy
31.52	Arms and the Man	24	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic → Sadler's
31.78	Fanny's First Play	29	Charles Macdona	Court
31.107	Widower's Houses	2	Prince of Wales's	
31.118	Mrs Warren's Profession	14	Charles Macdona	Court
31.123	Saint Joan	48	His Maj → Haymarket	
31.132	Man and Superman	1	Court	
31.187	Pygmalion	16	S. Esmé Percy	Kingsway
31.217	Man and Superman	16	S. Esmé Percy	Kingsway
32.138	Heartbreak House	48	H K Ayliff	Queen's
32.302	Too True to be Good	47	H K Ayliff	New
32.306	Caesar and Cleopatra	21	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic → Sadler's Wells
32.414	Getting Married	27	Milton Rosmer	Little
33.51	The Admirable Bashville	19	Harcourt Williams	Old Vic → Sadler's Wells
33.350	On the Rocks	73	Lewis Casson	Winter Garden
34.196	Village Wooing	33	Bernard Shaw	Little
34.235	Androcles and the Lion	8	Robert Atkins	Open Air
34.237	The Six of Calais	8	Robert Atkins	Open Air
34.269	Androcles and the Lion	28	Robert Atkins	Winter Garden
34.342	Saint Joan	35	Henry Cass	Old Vic → Sadler's Wells
35.91	Major Barbara	21	Henry Cass	Old Vic
35.281	Man and Superman	24	S. Esmé Percy	Cambridge
35.292	Pygmalion	25	S. Esmé Percy	Cambridge

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW				
35.319	The Apple Cart	21	Cedric Hardwicke	Cambridge
37.34	Candida	202	Irene Hentschel	Globe
37.84	Heartbreak House	31	Michael MacOwan	Westminster
37.287	Pygmalion	23	Tyrone Guthrie	Old Vic
38.87	You Never Can Tell	47	Michael MacOwan	Westminster
38.330	Man and Superman	15	Lewis Casson	Old Vic
38.332	Geneva	237	H K Ayliff	Saville-St James-Saville
39.27	The Shewing up of Blanco Posnes	3	Nancy Price	Playhouse
39.34	The Doctor's Dilemma	35	John Fernald	Westminster
39.37	Saint Joan	2	Oscar Alexander	Winter Garden
39.67	Candida	1	Michael MacOwan	Westminster
39.75	The Doctor's Dilemma	95	John Fernald	Whitehall
39.92	Candida	16	Michael MacOwan	Westminster
39.155	Pygmalion	21	Campbell Fullan	Haymarket
39.277	Major Barbara	39	John Fernald	Westminster
NOËL COWARD				
20.262	I'll Leave it to You	37	Stanley Bell	New
22.146	Bottles and Bones	1	Drury Lane	
22.170	The Better Half	29	Lewis Casson	Little
23.27	The Young Idea	60	Robert Courtneige	Savoy
23.202	London Calling	318	Herbert Mason	Duke of York's
24.385	The Vortex	244	Coward/MacDermott	Everyman/Royalty/ Comedy/Little
25.107	Fallen Angels	150	Stanley Bell	Globe
25.114	On With the Dance	229	Charles B Cochran	London Pavilion
25.172	Hay Fever	337	Noel Coward	Ambassador's
26.163	Easy Virtue	132	Basil Dean	Duke of York's
26.235	The Queen was in the Parlour	137	Basil Dean	St Martin's → Duke of York
26.288	The Rat Trap	19	George Carr	Everyman
27.44	The Marquise	129	Graham Browne	Criterion
27.294	Home Chat	38	Basil Dean	Duke of York's
27.331	Sirocco	28	Basil Dean	Daly's
28.108	This Year of Grace!	315	Charles B Cochrane	London Pavilion
28.177	No Rain Before Seven	1	Noel Coward	Adelphi
28.281	Fallen Angels	12	Martin Sabine	Regent
29.64	The Vortex	12	Martin Sabine	Regent
29.264	Bitter-Sweet	728	Noel Coward	His Majesty's → Palace
30.307	Private Lives	101	Noel Coward	Phoenix
30.415	Some Other Private Lives	1	Cedric Hardwicke (Green Room Rag)	London Hippodrome
31.103	Cochran's 1931 Revue	27	Frank Collins	London Pavilion
31.145	Bitter-Sweet	32	Charles Cochran	Lyceum
31.350	The Young Idea	63	A R Whatmore	St Martin's
31.440	Cavalcade	405	Noel Coward	Drury Lane

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
NOEL COWARD				
31.461	Private Lives	12	Martin Sabine	Regent
32.184	The Young Idea	12	Martin Sabine	Regent
32.303	Words and Music	163	Noel Coward	Adelphi
33.442	Hay Fever	26	Noel Coward	Shaftesbury
34.42	Conversation Piece	177	Noel Coward	His Majesty's
36.4	The Astonished Heart	68	Noel Coward	Phoenix
36.5	Family Album	32	Noel Coward	Phoenix
36.6	Red Peppers	70	Noel Coward	Phoenix
36.11	Fumed Oak	69	Noel Coward	Phoenix
36.12	Hands Across the Sea	62	Noel Coward	Phoenix
36.13	Shadow Play	70	Noel Coward	Phoenix
36.20	We Were Dancing	55	Noel Coward (Tonight at 8.30)	Phoenix
36.123	Ways and Means	28	Noel Coward (Tonight at 8.30)	Phoenix
36.148	Still Life	19	Noel Coward (Tonight at 8.30)	Phoenix
36.161	Private Lives	12		Victoria Palace
38.46	Operette	133	Noel Coward	His Majesty's
39.14	Design for Living	203	Charles la Trobe	Haymarket
39.283	Design for Living	33		Savoy
R C SHERRIFF				
28.420	Journey's End	2	James Whale	Apollo
29.15	Journey's End (3/6/29-7/6/30)	593	James Whale	Savoy → Prince of Wales's
29.69	Journey's End	6	James Whale	Arts
30.213	Badger's Green	35	James Whale	Prince of Wales's
31.435	Journey's End	12	Maron Sabine	Regent
34.328	Journey's End	1		Adelphi
34.345	Journey's End	22	R C Sherriff	Criterion
36.31	St Helena (and Jeanne de Casalis)	42	Henry Cass	Old Vic
JOHN GALSWORTHY				
20.73	The Defeat	1	Miles Malleson	Lyric Hammersmith
20.124	The Skin Game	349	Basil Dean	St Martin's
20.306	The Foundations	14	J Galsworthy	Everyman
20.307	The Little Man	14	J Galsworthy	Everyman
21.144	The First and the Last	3	Basil Dean	Aldwych
21.152	A Family Man	51	Norman McKinnel	Comedy
22.35	Justice	23	E Lyall Swete	Court
22.56	The Pigeon	24	E Lyall Swete	Court
22.63	Loyalties	407	Basil Dean	St Martin's
22.75	The Silver Box	39	E Lyall Swete	Court
22.109	Defeat	6	Norman McDermott	Everyman

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
JOHN GALSWORTHY				
22.116	Windows	39	Leon M Lion	Court
22.138	The Pigeon	5	Norman McDermott	Everyman
24.90	The Forest	58	Basil Dean	St Martin's
24.356	Old English	97	E Lyall Swete	Haymarket
25.205	The Show	37	Basil Drew	St Martin's
26.134	Punch and Go	21	Nancy Price	Everyman
26.231	Escape	242	Leon M Lion	Ambassador's
27.207	Windows	21	Milton Rosmer	Everyman
27.216	Joy	4	Edith Craig	Arts
27.244	A Family Man	37	Herbert Lomas	Everyman
28.13	The Eldest Son	20	Leslie Banks	Everyman
28.212	The Pigeon	17	Stanley Drewitt	Everyman
28.272	Justice	40	Leon M Lion	Wyndham's
28.298	Loyalties	96	Basil Dean	Wyndham's
28.353	The Silver Box	12	Martin Sabine	Regent
28.383	The Silver Box	28	John Galsworthy	Everyman
29.205	Exiled	45	Leon M Lion	Wyndham's
29.279	The Skin Game	88	Leon M Lion	Wyndham's
29.371	The Roof	75	Basil Dean	Vaudeville
31.25	The Silver Box	114	Lawrence Hanray	Fortune
31.335	The Silver Box	60	Nancy Price	Fortune
32.9	Windows	34	Malcolm Morley	Duchess
32.33	Escape	12	Martin Sabine	Regent
32.257	Escape	20	Leon M Lion	Garrick
32.281	Loyalties	40	Leon M Lion	Garrick
32.317	Justice	28	Leon M Lion	Garrick
32.380	The Silver Box	24	Nancy Price	Little
33.163	Strife	32	Stanley Drewitt	Little
34.195	The Little Man	33	Nancy Price	Little
35.135	Justice	23	Leon M Lion	Playhouse
35.156	The Skin Game	28	Leon M Lion	Playhouse
35.188	A Family Man	20	Leon M Lion	Playhouse
T S ELIOT				
35.340	Sweeney Agonistes	15	Rupert Doone	Westminster
36.316	Murder in the Cathedral	113	E Martin Browne	Duchess
37.90	Murder in the Cathedral	15	E Martin Browne	Duchess
37.187	Murder in the Cathedral	35	E Martin Browne	Old Vic
39.64	The Family Reunion	38	E Martin Browne	Westminster
SIR J M BARRIE				
20.25	The Admirable Crichton	134	Gerald du Maurier	Royalty
20.129	Mary Rose	399	E Holman Clerk	Haymarket
20.393	Peter Pan	50	Lichfield Owen	St James's

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
J M BARRIE				
20.409	Pantaloon	13	Robert Atkins	Old Vic
21.219	Quality Street	324	Charles La Trobe (and J M Barrie)	Haymarket
21.350	Peter Pan	58	Lichfield Owen	St James's
21.359	Shall We Join the Ladies?	1	Gerald du Maurier	Palace
22.131	Dear Brutus	257	Gerald du Maurier	Wyndham's
22.342	Peter Pan	36	Lichfield Owen	St James's
23.46	Half an Hour	1	Dion Boucicault	His Majesty's
23.116	What Every Woman Knows	284	E Holman Clark	Apollo
23.184	Rosalind	50	Donald Calthrop	Adelphi
23.195	The Will	229	Esmé Percy	St Martin's
23.258	The Little Minister	133	Basil Dean	Queen's
23.288	Peter Pan	50	Lichfield Owen?	Adelphi
24.33	Alice Sit-by-the-Fire	69	Stanley Bell	Comedy
24.272	A Slice of Life	1		St Martin's
24.407	Peter Pan	32		Adelphi
24.410	A Kiss for Cinderella	63	Charles La Trobe/ J M Barrie	Haymarket
24.421	The Little Minister	18	Basil Dean/E P Clift	Regent
25.339	Shall We Join the Ladies?	1		His Majesty's
25.380	Peter Pan	50	Lichfield Owen	Shaftesbury
24.4	The Admirable Crichton	1	J B Fagan	Savoy
26.7	Mary Rose	90	Charles La Trobe	Haymarket
26.226	Truth About the Russian Doctors	37		Savoy
26.380	Peter Pan	33	J Wallet-Waller	Adelphi
27.5	Quality Street	2	J B Fagan	Savoy
27.230	Barbara's Wedding	75	Robert Loraine	Savoy → Apollo
27.367	Peter Pan	38	Lichfield Owen	Gaiety
28.176	The Twelve Pound Look	1	Edmund Gwenn	Adelphi
28.446	Peter Pan	44	Lichfield Owen	Garrick
28.462	Rosaline	1	Duncan McRae	Arts
29.40	Quality Street	70	Charles La Trobe/ J M Barrie	Haymarket
29.125	Shall We Joint the Ladies?	1	Gerald du Maurier	Palace
29.159	Mary Rose	65	Charles La Trobe/ J M Barrie	Haymarket
29.285	Barbara's Wedding	29	Robert Loraine	Apollo
29.292	Dear Brutus	107	Gerald du Maurier	Playhouse
29.389	The Old Lady Shows Her Medals	37	James T Woodburn	Lyric Hammersmith
29.433	Peter Pan	33	Lichfield Owen	St James's
30.385	What Every Woman Knows	1	Charles La Trobe?	Haymarket
30.442	Peter Pan	29	Lichfield Owen	Palladium
31.531	Peter Pan	29	Lichfield Owen	Palladium
32.200	Shall We Join the Ladies?	1	Gerald du Maurier	Drury Lane
32.460	Peter Pan	25	Lichfield Owen	Palladium
33.46	A Well-Remembered Voice	1	Cyril Campion	Shaftesbury

Ref No.	Production	Perfs	Prod/Dir	Theatre
J M BARRIE				
33.361	Rosalind	1		Playhouse
33.379	A Kiss for Cinderella	2	Hilda Trevelyan/ Lovell	New
33.388	Peter Pan	24	Lichfield Owen	Palladium
34.378	Peter Pan	29	Lichfield Owen	Palladium
35.451	Peter Pan	21	Stephen Thomas	Palladium
36.373	The Boy David	55	Komisarjevsky	His Majesty's
36.394	Peter Pan	25	Stephen Thomas	Palladium
37.435	Peter Pan	25	Cecil King	Palladium
37.436	A Kiss for Cinderella	34	Murray MacDonald	Phoenix
38.96	Shall We Join the Ladies?	1	Tyrone Guthrie	Cambridge
38.157	Rosalind	1	Dan O'Neil	His Majesty's
38.380	Peter Pan	24	Cecil King	Palladium
39.12	The Will	24	Michael MacOwan	Westminster
J B PRIESTLEY				
31.208	The Good Companions	331	Julian Wylie	His Majesty's → Lyric
32.162	Dangerous Corner	150	Tyrone Guthrie	Lyric
33.353	Laburnum Grove	335	Cedric Hardwicke	Duchess
34.262	Eden End	162	Irene Hentschel	Duchess
35.106	Cornelius	77	Basil Dean	Duchess
35.196	Duet in Floodlight	6	Cedric Hardwicke/ J B Priestley	Apollo
35.362	If We All Talked Like the Talkies	1	Hubert Harben	Vaudeville (Green Room Rag)
36.124	Bees on the Boat Deck	37	Olivier/Richardson	Lyric
36.233	Spring Tide	116	H K Ayliff	Duchess
37.270	Time and the Conways	225	Irene Hentschel	Duchess
37.288	I Have Been Here Before	210	Lewis Casson	Royalty
37.373	People at Sea	43	Auriol Lee	Apollo
38.278	When We Are Married	279	Basil Dean	St Martin's → Prince's
38.291	Dangerous Corner	69	Michael MacOwan	Westminster
39.41	Johnson Over Jordan	75	Basil Dearden	New → Saville
39.214	Music at Night	79	Michael MacOwan	Westminster

SCHEDULE 5

PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE AT THE SHAKESPEARE MEMORIAL THEATRE 1919-1939

All's Well That Ends Well	2	1922/35
Antony and Cleopatra	5	1921/24/27/31/35
As You Like It	11	1919/20/21/25/27/30/32/33/35/37/39
The Comedy of Errors	2	1938/39
Coriolanus	4	1919/26/33/39
Cymbeline	3	1920/22/37
Hamlet	9	1920/22/24/27/29/30/33/36/37
Julius Caesar	9	1919/22/25/26/28/30/32/34/36
Henry IV Part One	5	1923/28/31/32/35
Henry IV Part Two	4	1921/23/26/32
Henry V	4	1920/27/34/37
Henry VIII	1	1938
King John	1	1925
King Lear	5	1924/31/32/36/37
Richard II	7	1920/24/26/29/30/33/39
Richard III	4	1921/23/28/29
Love's Labours Lost	2	1925/1934
Macbeth	10	1920/21/23/25/27/29/30/31/33/38
Measure for Measure	2	1923/31
The Merchant of Venice	9	1920/21/24/26/28/29/32/35/36
The Merry Wives of Windsor	10	1919/12/23/24/26/30/31/35/37/38
A Midsummer Night's Dream	12	1919/21/23/24/26/28/30/31/32/33/ 1934/37
Much Ado About Nothing	11	1920/22/23/25/27/29/30/33/34/36/39
Othello	4	1922/24/30/39
Romeo and Juliet	8	1919/26/29/30/33/36/38

The Taming of the Shrew	10	1920/22/23/24/27/29/31/33/36/39
The Tempest	6	1919/26/30/34/35/38
Timon of Athens	1	1928
Twelfth Night	12	1919/20/22/25/27/29/30/32/34/36 1938/39
The Two Gentlemen of Verona	2	1925/38
The Winter's Tale	6	1919/21/25/31/32/37
	180	**9 plays per year.**

SCHEDULE 6

PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE ON BBC RADIO 1922-1939

PLAY	DATE	MINS	PRODUCER
Antony and Cleopatra	16.07.30	90	Lewis
	11.02.34	?	Cresswell
	28.02.37	115	Cresswell/Gielgud
As You Like It	15.08.32	90	Glasby/Cresswell
	11.03.34	120	Cresswell
Coriolanus	26/27.04.33	2x75	Cresswell/Burnham
	09.02.36	120	Cresswell
Cymbeline	18.11.34	120	Cresswell
	08.12.35	120	Cresswell
(Scenes)	27.05.38	30	Richmond
Hamlet (Scenes)	08.03.25	30	Barrymore
	05.06.32	120	Burnham/Gielgud
	16.12.34	120	Burnham/Gielgud
	01.05.39	?	Richmond
Henry V	05.05.35	120	Rose
Henry VIII	07.06.23	60	Lewis
	37.	?	Rose
Julius Caesar (Scenes) (Note 1)	29.10.39	45	Gielgud
King John (Scenes) (Note 2)	31.05.23	60	Lewis
King Lear	12.09.28	?	Unknown
	26.10.35	?	Unknown
(Note 3)	15.05.38	120	Cresswell
Macbeth	18.10.23	120	Lewis/Nesbitt
	22.07.30	45	Burnham/Hardy
	12.03.33	120	
Burnham/Hardy/Gielgud			
	13.10.35	120	Cresswell

(Scenes) (Note 4)	22.12.39	60	Freeman/Gielgud
Measure for Measure	14.10.34	105	Burnham/Rose
Merchant of Venice (Scenes)	23.05.23	30	Lewis
(Scenes) (Note 5)	13.05.34	30	Wood
Merry Wives of Windsor	09.03.39	?	Rose
Midsummer Night's Dream	25.03.23	120	Nesbitt/Lewis
Much Ado About Nothing) (Scene)	31.01.26	35	Ainley
	14.05.33	105	Glasby/Rose
	12.07.36	105	Payne/Rose
	03.01.37	90	Cresswell
Othello	13.03.32	120	Gielgud
	07.02.38	?	Rose
Richard II	19.05.35	105	Cass/Sieveking
	12.04.36	120	
Feltham/Gielgud/Shaw			
	25.08.37	?	Rose
Richard III	17.11.35	120	Rose
	31.10.38	?	Richmond
Romeo and Juliet	05.07.23	120	Nesbitt/Lewis
	12.11.32	120	Unknown
	11.01.38	120	Unknown
	25.10.39	?	Unknown
Taming of the Shrew	24.06.31	?	Unknown
	10.03.35	90	Cresswell
Tempest	16.01.25	?	Unknown
	18.11.27	115	Hogan
(Note 6)	31.01.30	45	Earle/Cresswell
	22.02.31	75	Harding/Gielgud
	14.06.36	120	Harding/Gielgud
Troilus and Cressida	10.02.35	90	Burnham
Twelfth Night	28.05.23	135	Nesbitt/Rose
(Note 7.)	08.07.34	45	Atkins/Wood
	12.01.36	120	Cresswell
	06.12.37	?	Unknown

Winter's Tale	Two early productions – dates unknown.

Note 1. Second broadcast. First directed by Howard Rose on unknown date.

Note 2. This was part of a programme called 'The Miss Ellen Terry Concert'. Scene 4.1. only used.

Note 3. Actually the fourth reference to Lear by the BBC. Previous three:

i) Storm scene during programme 'Storm and Calm', 1925

ii) Two part London local broadcast 1928

iii) Schools programme with Ralph Richardson 1930.

Note 4. Actually called 'Macbeth, King of Scotland', a programme of scenes.

Note 5. BBC's third known *Merchant of Venice*. First was an Abbey Theatre production in 1932 broadcast by BBC Belfast.

Note 6. Excerpts for schools programme.

Note 7. Broadcast from the Open Air Theatre.

SCHEDULE 7

SELECTED HOLLYWOOD FILMS IN BRITAIN 1929-1939

Film.	Director	Year
Adventures of Robin Hood, The	Michael Curtiz	1938
All Quiet on the Western Front	Lewis Milestone	1930
Angels with Dirty Faces	Michael Curtiz	1938
Anna Karenina	Clarence Brown	1935
Barretts of Wimpole St., The	Sidney Franklin	1934
Blonde Venus	Joseph von Sternberg	1932
Blue Angel, The	Joseph von Sternberg	1930
Bride of Frankenstein	James Whale	1935
Broadway Melody	Harry Beaumont	1929
Broadway Melody of 1936	Roy del Ruth	1935
Broadway Melody of 1938	Roy del Ruth	1937
Captain's Courageous	Victor Fleming	1937
Cavalcade	Frank Lloyd	1933
Charge of the Light Brigade, The	Michael Curtiz	1936
City Lights	Charles Chaplin	1931
Cleopatra	Cecil B. DeMille	1934
Count of Monte Cristo, The	Rowland V. Lee	1934
David Copperfield	George Cukor	1935
Dawn Patrol	Edmund Goulding	1938
Day at the Races, A	Sam Wood	1937
Destry Rides Again	George Marshall	1939
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde	Rouben Mamoulian	1931
Dracula	Tod Browning	1931
Duck Soup	Leo McCarey	1933
Farewell to Arms, A	Frank Borzage	1932
Flying Down to Rio	Thornton Freeland	1933
Forty-Second St	Lloyd Bacon	
1933		

Frankenstein	James Whale	1931
Gold Diggers of 1933	Mervyn Leroy	1933
Gone with the Wind	Victor Fleming	1939
Goodbye Mr. Chips	Sam Wood	1939
Grapes of Wrath, The	John Ford	1939
Hell's Angels	Hughes/Neilan/Reed	1930
Hunchback of Notre Dame, The	William Dieterle	1939
Invisible Man, The	James Whale	1933
It Happened One Night	Frank Capra	1934
Jezebel	William Wyler	1938
Journey's End	James Whale	1930
King Kong	Cooper/Schoedsack	1933
Miserables, Les	Raymond Bernard	1934
Little Caesar	Mervyn LeRoy	1931
Little Women	George Cukor	1933
Lives of a Bengal Lancer, The	Henry Hathaway	1935
Lost Horizon	Frank Capra	1937
Marie Antoinette	WS Van Dyke	1938
Mary of Scotland	John Ford	1936
Mata Hari	George Fitzmaurice	1931
Mr. Deeds goes to Town	Frank Capra	1936
Mr. Smith goes to Washington	Frank Capra	1939
Murders in the Rue Morgue	Robert Florey	1932
Mutiny on the Bounty	Frank Lloyd	1935
New Adventures of Tarzan, The	Kull/McGaugh	1935
Night at the Opera, A	Sam Wood	1935
Of Human Bondage	John Cromwell	1934
Prisoner of Zenda, The	John Cromwell	1937
Private Life of Henry VIII, The	Alexander Korda	1933
Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex, The	Michael Curtiz	1939
Public Enemy, The	William A. Wellman	1931
Queen Christina	Rouben Mamoulian	1933
Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm	Allan Dwan	

1938

Roaring Twenties, The	Raoul Walsh	1939
Scarface	Howard Hawks	1932
Shanghai Express	Josef von Sternberg	1932
Show Boat	James Whale	1936
Snow White and the Seven Dwarves	David Hand	1937
Stagecoach	John Ford	1939
Svengali	Archie Mayo	1931
Tale of Two Cities, A	Jack Conway	1935
Thin Man, The	WS Van Dyke	1934
Top Hat	Mark Sandrich	1935
Treasure Island	Victor Fleming	1934
Wells Fargo	Frank Lloyd	1937
Wizard of Oz, The	Victor Fleming	1939
Wuthering Heights	William Wyler	1939

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